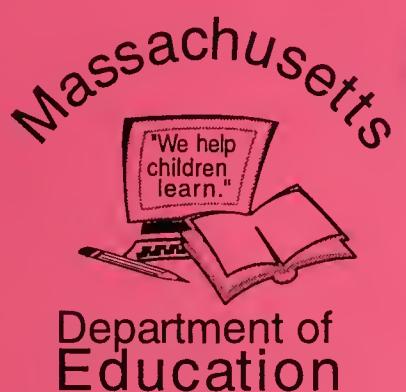


MASS. ED21.2: G94/7/2000



A GUIDE TO COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS FOR CHILDREN

A resource for program development and
ongoing implementation of
early care and education programs.



Department of
Education

January 2000



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Education

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David P. Driscoll
Commissioner of Education

January 2000

Dear Colleague:

The purpose of *A Guide to Community Partnerships for Children* is to provide technical assistance information on starting and running a Community Partnerships program. The program is designed to be flexible so that different communities throughout the Commonwealth can build on their services for young children and families and design the program to fit the character of their communities. Program staff, Council members and people interested in starting a program ask for guidance about a number of common topics. This guide compiles the ideas and experience of many contributors to the Community Partnerships program and provides assistance on these topics. I encourage you to make copies of this guide for members of your Council and other people involved in implementing the program.

The information in this guide covers a number of topics for programs in various stages of development. The introduction and section on forming a Community Partnerships Council will be of immediate interest to those involved in the initial organization and planning for the program. Other sections, such as the one on implementing the state sliding fee scale or on administering the grant and subcontracting, may be of more interest to those in the implementation stage of the program.

Please note that we have made some substantial revisions of last year's guide as well as reorganizing the guide. A section on conducting evaluations has been added. With the growth in funding for early childhood programs, there is a demonstrated need for increased program and fiscal accountability.

We hope that this guide will be helpful in developing your Community Partnerships for Children program. If you should have further questions about any of these topics or about other aspects of the program, please call Early Learning Services at (781) 338-6364, and ask to speak to the Early Learning liaison for your community.

Thank you for the work you do to strengthen the opportunities for early learning in Massachusetts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David P. Driscoll".

David P. Driscoll
Commissioner of Education

A Guide to Community Partnerships for Children

**A resource for program development and ongoing
implementation for early care and education programs**

January 2000

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SECTION I:
Creating and Improving Your
Community Partnerships for Children
Program

I. INTRODUCTION: CREATING PARTNERSHIPS FOR CHILDREN

One of the goals of the Education Reform Act of 1993 is for all young children to have the opportunity to participate in a high quality early childhood program before they enter kindergarten. To help achieve this goal, legislation established a program to increase the availability, affordability and quality of early care and education programs for three -and four -year old children in the Commonwealth. The Community Partnerships for Children (CPC) program is designed to build a collaborative system of early childhood programs and comprehensive services within a community or group of communities. The legislation pertaining to the program is contained in Appendix A: Legislation.

The name of this program, Community Partnerships for Children, implies that the responsibility for the care and education of young children extends beyond the immediate family and beyond any one agency. The providers of early childhood programs, related comprehensive and family support services, and other resources differ from one community to another, depending on the size and location of the community. The program name conveys an expectation that a coalition of programs, service agencies, businesses and families will work together to develop a cohesive system of early care and education for all children and families in the community. Clarification of the terms used here and throughout this guide may be found in Appendix B: Definitions.

History of the Program

The Community Partnerships for Children program grew out of the state Chapter 188 early childhood program initiated by the School Improvement Acts of 1985. Programs developed under Chapter 188 were primarily public school preschool programs that served young children at risk and included young children with disabilities. Enhanced kindergarten services were also provided. The program required a local advisory Council that included other early care and education providers, parents, and child care resource and referral agency representation. To further the goal of developing a statewide system of early care and education and to administer new funds provided by the FY 1993 state budget, the program was revised and renamed. The priorities were changed to focus exclusively on preschool, and more collaboration was required of the Council and in the provision of services. Participating programs were required to seek accreditation from the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs. In FY 1996, amendments were made to M.G.L. Chapter 15, Section 54 (Appendix A) that changed the eligibility criteria. Children served with any new funds were to be preschool-aged children of working families earning under 100% of the state median income and use of the Commonwealth's sliding fee scale was required. The program became the preschool component in the implementation of the Education Reform Act of 1993. The different phases of the program are described as follows (also see graphic, Community Partnerships for Children, which outlines the three phases):

Phase I: These programs were funded prior to FY 1993 under the name of Chapter 188. The program was meant to serve low income, at-risk preschool age children and young children with disabilities, and to enhance or extend the day of kindergarten programs. These were converted to Community Partnerships programs in FY 1994.

Phase II: These programs received new or expansion funds in FY 1993. This was the first year that the program became known as Community Partnerships for Children. Eligible children were at risk and/or from low income families. In FY 1994, Chapter 188 programs were merged with Community Partnerships programs.

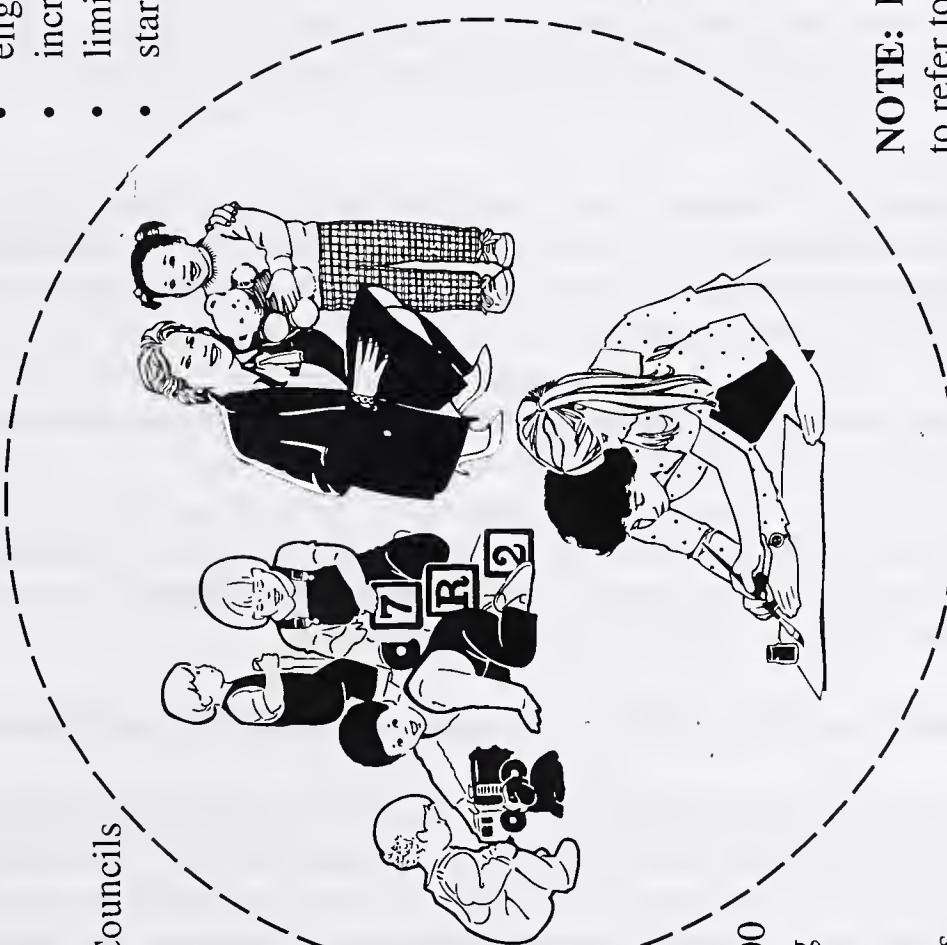
Phase III: These programs received new or expansion funds in FY 1996 through FY 2000. The eligibility for services became focused on children of working families.

Note: Expansion funds are additional funds in the fiscal year that they are awarded. Beginning in FY 1999, an existing CPC program that has continuation funds and is awarded expansion funds will operate under one amended budget.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS FOR CHILDREN

PHASE I

- began in FY'86
- called Chapter 188
- developed inclusive preschool classrooms
- enhanced kindergarten programs
- mainly in public schools
- established Early Childhood Advisory Councils
- priority: low income communities



PHASE II

- began in FY'93 with new funds
- renamed Community Partnerships for Children
- established 5 objectives for every program to meet
- eligibility: children at risk
- increased involvement of Head Start and child care
- limited to preschool-aged children
- started requiring accreditation

PHASE III

- new funding in FY'96, '97, '98, '99, 2000
- eligibility priority: children of working families earning 100% of SMI
- legislation amended
- emphasis on full day/full year programs
- increased involvement of private child care and family child care
- Community Partnerships Councils became governing bodies for programs
- started requiring Child Development Associate credential for family child care

NOTE: PHASE IV AND V: These have been used to refer to new funding cycles in FY'97 and '98. This terminology was helpful because at the time there were two-year contracts, one-year contracts and grants for the same program operating simultaneously. Henceforth, if there is a need to distinguish years, Phase III/97, Phase III/98, or Phase III/00 will be used in the future. If there is some significant programmatic change, that will be "Phase IV."

Program Objectives

The intent and requirements of the legislation have been organized under five objectives that provide the framework of the CPC program. Later sections of this guide provide additional information that will assist a Council in developing a plan that meets the objectives of the program. The five objectives are:

- 1. Increase the affordability and accessibility of programs for three- and four-year old children of diverse cultural, linguistic and economic backgrounds through the use of a sliding fee scale.**

In FY 2000, priority should be given to children on the OCCS waiting list. The parents of these children may be working or in training or education programs. The next priority should be based on the needs of families whose incomes are below 125% of the state median income. A mix of programs (full-day, full-year, part-day, part-year, and wrap-around options) should be considered. All parents must pay fees in accordance with the Commonwealth's Sliding Fee Scale. Funded programs must be willing to serve children with disabilities.

- 2. Enhance collaboration among families, community programs, business and other organizations concerned with children and families to develop a system of early care and education, reduce duplication of services and promote equitable services.**

- 3. Provide comprehensive early childhood programs and services for three- and four-year old children of working families.**

Comprehensive services may include nutrition; social and health services; home visiting; family support, education and literacy; and information and referral to other programs and services for families.

- 4. Provide early childhood programs and services that are high-quality.**

All participating center-based programs must be developmentally appropriate and be accredited or be seeking accreditation by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs (NAECP). **All** participating programs **must** meet relevant standards -- Department of Education Preschool Standards for public schools or other programs exempt from Office of Child Care Services (OCCS) licensing standards, or OCCS standards for programs subject to licensure, including Head Start (which must also meet its own performance standards).

Family child care providers must be licensed by the Office of Child Care Services **and have or seek** the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential **or** National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC) accreditation **or have** at least an Associate's degree in Early Childhood Education.

The Department of Education, the Office of Child Care Services and the Administration for Children and Families review proposals and programs to ensure

that only programs that comply with the required standards are funded to serve children. Lead agencies are also responsible for verifying that programs meet the required standards before placing children.

5. **Conduct community outreach to ensure that children of families, particularly those who may be difficult to reach by traditional methods, are offered opportunities to participate in a program that meets their needs.**

Meeting the Objectives

There are many ways these five program objectives may be met depending on the characteristics and resources of the community. A larger vision and mission for children and families may already have been developed in the community. The CPC program can be an important component of that vision. If such a plan or vision does not exist, the Community Partnerships Council members can start such a process and build a local network of programs that support the diverse needs of families and children and together, develop a written mission statement.

1. Objective: Affordability and Accessibility

- expand existing programs or create new programs in public and private preschool/child care, Head Start and family child care;
- develop flexible-hour programs or extended- or part-day programs at different times of the day to meet the needs of parents working different shifts;
- develop joint programs funded by Head Start, public school and/or private child care; and
- work with family child care providers to secure placements for eligible children.

2. Objective: Collaboration

Successful collaborations support activities across public and private domains. The Community Partnerships Council can play a key role in developing these activities. In some communities, an important step in collaboration may be joining or developing a community Council or coalition with a broad focus on programs for children and families (combining Councils for School-Linked Services, Community Connections, Massachusetts Family Network, for instance). Other activities could include developing collaborative:

- Council meetings that attract a variety of members, including several parents, business representatives, representatives of faith-based organizations, public libraries, etc.;
- early care and education, family literacy and family education programs;
- outreach efforts, community-wide interagency meetings;
- training for families and staff across programs;
- sponsorship of a community-wide early childhood fair;
- advocacy efforts for all young children and families;

- projects with child care resource and referral agencies;
- interagency program evaluation; and
- cross community agreements and subcontracts with lead agencies or programs in other towns to serve children whose parents work in those communities so that children are near their parents during the work day.

3. Objective: Comprehensive Services

- enhance health services, nutritional components, mental health and social services so that they will be more consistently available across various programs; and
- develop new programs or link with existing programs to address family involvement, parenting education, and family literacy (e.g., Massachusetts Family Network, Even Start, Parent-Child Home Program).

4. Objective: Quality

In addition to seeking NAECP or NAFCC accreditation, and the CDA credential and complying with applicable regulations, additional ways of promoting quality might be to:

- design staff development, training and program evaluation activities in conjunction with accreditation and the CDA credential that will lead to developmentally appropriate, inclusive programs;
- assist participating programs to be more developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate through the purchase of materials and curriculum resources;
- develop or enhance programs appropriate for children whose first language is not English;
- coordinate various resources available for staff development and training through federal, state, local and private funds and extend them to early childhood staff in various community programs. This may include coordinating professional development through the area child care resource and referral agency and/or collaborating with adjoining communities; and
- develop options for family involvement that are culturally and linguistically appropriate and that will enrich the program and the families involved.

5. Objective: Outreach

- work with the area child care resource and referral agency to coordinate and expand outreach;
- develop connections with ethnic organizations, community employers, the medical community, recreation groups, religious groups and community service organizations;
- inform linguistic and cultural groups in native languages through trusted channels (spreading the word through key people in that cultural community, religious groups, etc.);
- use a variety of media (television, radio stations, newspapers, brochures in various languages); and

- work with all early care and education programs that desire to be involved in the program.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Lead Agency

The development of a local early care and education system through Community Partnerships begins with expanding and enhancing existing programs and services. Children placed in programs with CPC funds should be integrated as much as possible into existing early care and education programs. New classrooms or programs are created if a needs assessment indicates the necessity. They should be designed for children from diverse economic and cultural backgrounds and with diverse abilities and needs. Limiting program eligibility to three -and four -year old children of working families is *not* intended to result in early childhood classrooms that only serve children of low-income working parents, separated from others. Community Partnerships is inclusive of children with disabilities and provides the opportunity for communities to increase the equity of services across income levels, linguistic groups, neighborhoods, etc.

Planning and implementing a multifaceted program such as Community Partnerships through a community Council or coalition is a difficult task. Many people and agencies are accustomed to focusing on the unique priorities of their organization and the children and families they serve. Although the CPC program is administered through one lead agency in the community, it is vital that the Community Partnership Council or Coalition emerges as the planning and policy-making body responsible for making the CPC program fit into a larger vision for young children and families in the community.

To avoid any potential conflict between a lead agency and the Council, it is important to be clear about roles and responsibilities. The role of the Council is outlined in Chapter II of this guide. The role of the lead agency will vary, but based on the experience of successful partnerships and coalitions (Novic and Tufts University, 1997), the usual responsibilities of lead agencies are:

1. Fiscal

- ensuring accurate accounting of CPC funds provided through the grant and responding to any fiscal queries from the Department of Education;
- preparing budget updates and amendments for approval by the Community Partnerships Council. (Final budget amendment requests should be submitted directly to a community's Early Learning Services liaison by April 30 for approval so funds can be expended for goods and services received by June 30.);
- following the Department's manual, *Grants for Schools: Getting Them and Using Them: A Procedural Manual*; and
- submitting two fiscal reports to Early Learning Services; one due March 1 (covering the period July 1 through January 31) and another due August 30 (covering the period February 1 through June 30).

2. Programmatic

- distributing copies of the approved grant proposal and any amended budgets to all members of the Community Partnerships Council; submitting data and program and budget updates as required annually;

- providing representation on the Community Partnerships Council and sharing participation in working with the Council in developing the proposal;
- providing services directly and/or by subcontracting with other public and private agencies;
- developing, managing and monitoring subcontracts and providing reimbursements in a timely fashion (preferably on a monthly basis);
- collaborating with all participating agencies and working with the Community Partnerships Council on all decisions regarding use of CPC funds, employment of CPC staff, and programming; and
- following the recommendations in *A Guide to Community Partnerships for Children*.

3. Accountability

- submit standard monthly data reports at the end of each month that aggregate child attendance data and track direct service expenditures and parent fees from all providers;
- assure that all providers maintain attendance records, and that data on income, work status, education level and social security numbers of parents are maintained in a way that can be reported.

NOTE: Pursuant to FY 2000 budget line item 7030-1000, social security numbers must be requested from parents of children enrolled in early care and education programs. However, according to the Privacy Act of 1974, disclosure of social security numbers is voluntary and refusal to provide a social security number cannot be used to deny children or families services for which they would otherwise be eligible. As part of the request, individuals need to be informed that the purpose of collecting this information is to enable the state to match federal child care funds in order to continue to receive those funds. The social security numbers should be maintained at the lead agency level, but be available for review by the Office of Child Care Services and the Department of Transitional Assistance.

CPCs will need to report to the Department of Education, in aggregate, the amount of funds used to provide services to children who were enrolled from the OCCS waiting list and those of families earning under 85% of the state median income.

II. FORMING THE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS COUNCIL

Legislation requires formation of a Community Partnerships Council that selects a lead agency (a school district, a Head Start agency or a licensed child care provider) to manage the Community Partnerships for Children (CPC) grant and that develops a proposal.

The Community Partnerships Council is a mechanism for developing collaborative relationships and partnerships that improve early childhood care and education in the community. Participating in a Community Partnerships Council gives families and community members an opportunity to be involved in decision making. The Council is a vehicle for assessing and responding to the needs of young children and their families through sharing of information, program planning and development.

Establishing Council Leadership

The individual or organization that initiates the Council is responsible for fostering Council leadership. It is helpful to have co-chairpersons who represent different perspectives; such a leadership structure helps to develop a collaborative spirit. Ideally, the chairperson(s) would have leadership experience in committee organization. Co-chairing the Council provides parents with opportunities to assume leadership. To ensure a balance of power in the collaborative process, representatives of the lead agency are discouraged from chairing or co-chairing Councils.

Organizing a Council

The steps recommended for organizing a Council are:

1. identify existing Councils and take steps to merge or combine Councils (see section on Working with Existing Councils or Coalitions);
2. identify potential Council representatives of parents, providers of early care and education and others in the community (see section on Membership and Size of the Council);
3. select an appropriate invitational or selection method;
4. plan an organizational meeting and develop the meeting agenda;
5. conduct the organizational meeting;
6. identify roles and responsibilities;
7. articulate the Council's mission;
8. select leaders representing different interests, e.g., providers, parents, business (see above: Establishing Council Leadership); and
9. develop goals and objectives that are well-defined and achievable.

On the next page is an activity that may help Community Partnerships Councils create a vision and set goals.

An Activity for Getting Started: Creating a Vision

A structured activity for creating a shared vision can be an effective introduction to setting goals and objectives. It can help people from different programs and agencies to focus on their similarities rather than their differences, building a foundation for communication.

One such activity is "brainstorming." Brainstorming is a technique used to generate input and ideas. One person's idea may generate a different idea from another group member. To keep the ideas flowing, it is important that the process not be stopped to evaluate ideas. As ideas are generated, record each idea as it was stated (try not to paraphrase). The general rules for brainstorming are to be creative, to build on others' ideas, to defer discussion and evaluation of ideas during brainstorming, and to *accept* all ideas.

Focus Question: Imagine yourself looking at your community ten years from now. The ideal system of early care and education for young children and their families is in place. What does it look like?

In this activity each participant considers what he/she wants for young children in the community. Do not restrict boundaries to what is "reasonable or realistic," but be free to consider the "possibilities" of their hopes for children and their families. Each team member should have an opportunity to contribute without interruption, discussion or evaluation. All ideas are accepted as equal in this phase.

After each participant has shared his/her ideas, the commonalities can be synthesized and a shared vision developed. Follow-up questions to consider are:

- What long and short term goals could we set to achieve our vision for early care and education?
- What are the barriers that hinder implementation of our vision?
- What resources are needed to implement our vision? Are they available in our community?
- How could we develop a system that would be more responsive to the needs of children and families?

[This activity was adapted from Leadership for Collaboration: Participant's Workbook. Southeastern Regional Vision for Education (SERVE). North Carolina University, Greensboro, School of Education. ERIC document # ED366457.]

Roles and Responsibilities of the Community Partnerships Council

The Council plays a key role in developing a successful CPC program. The following are recommended responsibilities of local Councils:

- make decisions and policies in collaboration with the lead agency;
- ensure that policies are consistent with this Guide;
- develop, review, and approve proposals, budgets, amendments and other relevant information pertaining to the CPC program;
- review all aspects of the CPC budget on a monthly basis in order to track expenditures, consider needed amendments, and evaluate how the fiscal and programmatic components are operating relative to each other;
- determine policies for rate reimbursement;
- plan, implement and conduct ongoing evaluation based on community resources;
- help collect and analyze data required for program planning that meets the community's needs as well as Department of Education requirements;
- provide direction and advice on early care and education programs as needed (e.g., planning joint staff development and training; reviewing/discussing personnel issues; planning interagency agreements and/or policies for transition procedures for young children and their families);
- review and evaluate progress toward achieving the Community Partnerships Council's mission and goals regularly;
- establish bylaws that govern voting members and the roles, responsibilities and procedures of the Community Partnerships Council. Bylaws might include the following sections:
 - purpose of the organization
 - membership -- representation, terms, conditions
 - officers -- titles, roles and responsibilities, terms of office
 - executive committee and subcommittees -- membership and scope of responsibilities
 - election procedures
 - procedures for amending bylaws
- set meetings -- number, time, place -- that best accommodate the schedules of the membership and allow for optimum participation;
- conduct public meetings that have been posted and follow the Open Meeting Law (Appendix C);
- record attendance (name and agency affiliation) and minutes of meetings;
- send minutes of meetings/agendas of future meetings to Council members and Early Learning Services liaison; and
- oversee program quality.

The Council may delegate some of these responsibilities through its bylaws to a subcommittee or an executive committee.

Executive Committee of the Council: Council bylaws may establish an Executive Committee structure for purposes of expediency and/or to deal with immediate situations. The Council defines the membership of the Executive Committee (e.g., chairperson(s), members), and the role, responsibilities and limits of the Executive Committee. Committee members should represent various sectors of the early care and education community, including at least one parent of a young child.

One function of an Executive Committee might be to develop, review and/or initially approve amendments to the CPC budget. While this method enables the work to be executed in a timely manner, the final decision(s)/information must be presented to the full Council for a formal vote.

Other Subcommittees: Bylaws may also establish subcommittees that focus on the mission and goals of the Council. Examples of subcommittee functions include proposal writing, fiscal oversight, fundraising, and training. Subcommittees should prepare and retain minutes, including attendance and votes of all subcommittee meetings. The subcommittee chairperson makes recommendations to the full Council for final approval. Some subcommittees may have members who are not members of the full Council.

Voting: When establishing which Council members will vote, consider the following:

- include parents representing a variety of programs;
- if any one agency in a community/communities operates several different programs, no more than two to three people should represent that particular agency and these members should be balanced by members representing other sectors (Head Start, public school, child care should have roughly equal voting membership);
- the lead agency should have no more than one or two votes;
- select members committed to active involvement -- attending Council meetings; participating on subcommittees; reviewing minutes, budgets, amendments, etc.; and
- balance the voting members between those who receive funds with other community representatives who do not receive funding.

Membership and Size of the Council

The strength of a Council lies in its membership. According to the authorizing statute, there are nine required members designated to serve. In addition, the Department of Education has added some new required numbers (see page 13). Those noted by the statute include: a principal, three individuals who provide early care and education to young children, two parents of young children, a member of the local resource and referral agency, a representative of the local Head Start agency and a representative of private providers of child care. The "representative of private providers of child care" should be a person who represents the collective interests of private providers in the community. This person could be an early care and education provider from a preschool, faith-based child care, family child care, or child care center (either profit or non-profit).

Membership Requirements for MFN and PCHP

As of FY 2000, the Department of Education has added some required members based on the expansion of the Massachusetts Family Network program and the new Parent-Child Home Program. The additional required members include:

- Two representatives of family child care providers in the community. One should represent independent providers. If there is a family child care system serving a community, the other should represent a family child care system.
- A representative of the Early Intervention (EI) program serving the community. If more than one EI program serves the community, a representative of each program should be encouraged to participate.
- A third parent of a young child.
- The coordinator or other representative of the Massachusetts Family Network (MFN) program, if there is one.
- The coordinator or representative of the Parent-Child Home Program, if there is one.
- Councils must select two representatives from among the following four categories: business, medical profession, faith-based organization and senior citizens.

When determining size, try to maintain a manageable number of people while also seeking representation from all key groups/interests in your community. Successful Councils do not “stack the deck” with several representatives of one agency, interest group or sector of the early care and education community. If two or more communities form a joint Council, each community must contribute a minimum of one teacher, one parent, and an administrator. The representatives should reflect balanced interests, for instance a private preschool teacher, Head Start parent and a public school principal.

A Council's bylaws outline how members are selected and replaced. In recruiting new members, qualifications and interests of prospective members should relate to the purpose of the Council. The members of the Community Partnerships Council should be broadly representative of the community at large and include members who are concerned about the interests of young children and families. Active recruitment of members from the business community, civic groups, and faith-based organizations leads to a more inclusive Council. A successful Council is mindful of the expertise and talents of all of its members.

Membership for Community Partnerships Council

Council shall be broadly representative of the cultural and linguistic diversity of the community. Councils shall strive to maintain membership reflecting full community participation by a minimum of the entities listed here.

Public
School
Principal

Representative
from
Public
Library

Representative
from
Business

Representative
of PCHP

Community\City
or
Town Official

Parent of
Young Child

Representative
of a Social Service
Agency

Representative
of Lead Agency

Representative
of
Higher
Education
Supt. and/or
Asst. Supt
and/or
Sped Dir.

Representative
of Children
with
Disabilities
Teacher
Kinderergarten

Representative
from
Medical
Community

Representative
Local
Resource &
Referral
Agency

Representative
from
Early
Intervention

Representative
from
Young
Child
Referral
Agency

Representative
of
MFN

* Independent
Family Child
Care Provider

* Family Child
Care System
Provider

Parent of
Young Child

Representative
of Senior
Citizens

* Provider
of Early
Care and
Education

Representative
of
Faith-Based
Organization

* Provider
of Early
Care and
Education

Required Members

*Example of 3 individuals who are providers of early care and education:
Preschool Teacher
Early Childhood Coordinator
Family Child Care Provider

Recommended Members

Required Categories
(two of four)

Required Subcommittee for Home Visiting Programs

CPC Programs that receive Parent-Child Home Program funding or use CPC funds for other home visiting programs (such as Parents as Teachers, HIPPY) must establish a Home Visiting Subcommittee that reports to the CPC Council. That subcommittee should select a representative to attend the full Council meetings. All members of the subcommittee do not have to be members of the CPC Council. The purpose of the subcommittee, in addition to overseeing the Parent-Child Home Program, is to ensure collaboration, improve services and avoid duplication of home visiting services. At a minimum, quarterly meetings are recommended. If a community has already established another home visiting advisory board, such as a FIRSTLink Planning Committee or a Healthy Families Advisory Board¹ that group can serve as the subcommittee as long as they are: (a) willing to expand the Board to include the PCHP; and (b) represented on the CPC Council or community-wide coalition group. The subcommittee must include, but not be limited to:

- the Parent-Child Home Program coordinator;
- a representative of an Early Intervention program;
- at least one representative of any other state-funded home visiting program, such as Healthy Families or FIRSTLink;
- a representative of Early Head Start, if there is a program in the community;
- a representative of the Massachusetts Family Network program, if there is one;
- a representative of other family support programs or organizations that are conducting home visits; and
- at least one parent representative.

Working with Existing Councils and Coalitions

There may be one or more Councils/coalitions concerned with early care and education, family support and/or preventative programs already existing in a community (such as Massachusetts Family Network, Community Connections, School-Linked Services, and Massachusetts Family Centers).

Communities are strongly encouraged to broaden or merge these Councils/coalitions to create a larger collaborative board that can serve as an “umbrella” coalition for several different Councils or subcommittees. This collaborative merger will prevent agencies and Councils from working in isolation, duplicating efforts, and fragmenting services. The larger coalition group must then develop a broad vision for creating, maintaining and enhancing integrated services for children and families. Strategies for successful merging or broadening of Councils/coalitions include:

¹ FIRSTLink is a Department of Public Health Programs (DPH); Healthy Families is funded by the Children's Trust Fund in Partnership with DPH.

- planning a joint meeting of all Councils;
- discussing the purpose of the Community Partnerships Council in relationship to each existing Council;
- discussing goals, objectives and duplication of services;
- reviewing the membership of each Council;
- discussing the benefits and drawbacks of merging the Councils;
- discussing the possibility of a merged Council that could include all interested members by using a subcommittee format for specific interest groups; and
- considering the selection of co-chairs who will enhance joint community Council involvement.

Here is an example of how one community merged Councils/coalitions:

Medford Family Resource Coalition

Five years ago the Medford Family Resource Coalition (MFRC) was established. It was designed to bring together various existing initiatives within the community that required community Councils/coalitions and to address the needs of families with children birth through grade three in a comprehensive community-wide manner. Prior to the establishment of the MFRC, Medford received Community Partnerships for Children, Massachusetts Family Network and School-Linked Services grants. Since the establishment of the MFRC, Medford secured additional funds from the Children's Trust Fund for a Massachusetts Family Center.

The structure of the MFRC is such that specific grant programs are managed by subcommittees, e.g., the Mass. Family Network/Family Center Subcommittee, School-Linked Local Partnership Subcommittee, and Community Partnerships for Children Subcommittee. The Community Partnerships for Children Subcommittee meets on a monthly basis to address issues specific to the CPC program, e.g., application for continuation funding, program planning, implementation and/or evaluation strategies. The CPC Subcommittee reports to the larger coalition at bi-monthly MFRC meetings to get additional feedback and support. The CPC Subcommittee is the governing body for the CPC project. However, by sitting on the MFRC, the CPC subcommittee is able to enhance the project by directly coordinating it with other initiatives that the previous CPC Council did not have direct knowledge of or access to.

Creating and Maintaining Effective and Inclusive Councils and Coalitions

Creating a Council structure and managing Council meetings that are both effective and welcoming of all members presents a challenge in most communities. Early childhood professionals at the table may have differing educational backgrounds, salaries and work environments, and in many cases, may be competitors. Parents, business and community representatives are often lost in the jargon and “alphabet soup” of meetings, yet explaining all the details to them takes time, and can be frustrating for everyone. There are steps that can ensure that all Council members understand their roles and responsibilities as well as the issues that they are working on. The most important strategies include:

- Define roles and responsibilities. Define the role of the Council, including its relationship to other boards and the lead agency. Define the role of each category of Council membership and discuss expectations of members.
- Conduct Council orientation programs for all members. Discuss the mission and history of the CPC program, and discover and build on each Council member’s experiences, skills and perspectives. This is particularly important for parents.
- Create a Council handbook. This is a shared written history and guide to membership. Include a glossary of terms commonly used by the Council, copies of proposals and budgets, bylaws and the names, telephone numbers and brief biographies of members.
- Conduct ongoing evaluations of the Council process. Evaluations can be monthly or quarterly and can be as simple as having participants note anonymously what they “liked best” and “liked least” about the meetings. Councils can also take five minutes at the end of each meeting to assess the process. Evaluate parent, community and business participation and involvement in particular.
- Understand what each member has to offer the Council and the CPC program. Often participants are more aware of what other Council members may want out of their experience than what they have to offer. By focusing on what members have to offer, the Council can marshal all of its resources to support children and families. Various participants might be able to offer logistical support, such as a meeting place, arranging child care, planning food or arranging translations; or programmatic support such as conducting workshops for teachers. Business people might contribute their organizational or fiscal management skills. Every member needs to feel that he/she has a role. Otherwise, attendance and participation will likely wane.
- Show, don’t tell. Professionals who are “authority figures” in the community can show that each Council member’s opinion is valued by talking less and listening more.

Tips for Improving Parent Participation

Parent involvement in the governance of Community Partnership Councils is part of a national movement in several fields to empower the “consumers” of services to develop programs, identify their own service needs and evaluate services. Parent involvement can create institutional change as well as a more responsive and effective program. However, creating equal and collaborative partnerships between parents and professionals can be challenging. Working parents of young children are very busy, and may not have the time or flexibility to attend meetings. Professionals may say they want parent involvement but, at the same time, make the discussion difficult to understand. Parents may feel intimidated by professionals who wield power in their communities.

The goal is to “make room at the table” for parents so that they feel welcome and are effective participants. In addition to ideas for improving Councils in general, the following are some suggestions for including parents:

- Recruit parents whose children are in a CPC program.
- Elect a parent co-chair of the Council.
- Establish a subcommittee to plan and develop parent activities and involvement.
- Invite parents to conferences and provide them with training in program leadership and early childhood and family support issues.
- Develop a plan for parent leadership development to ensure a pool of parents who can serve on the Council. Establish a goal of having a significant number of parents on the Council within three years.

Meeting logistics:

- Offer child care (either on-site or pay for child care at home) and transportation.
- Consider paying parents a stipend for attending meetings.
- Provide translation or language support for parents with limited English proficiency.
- Hold some meetings at night or in early evening so that parents who work during the day as well as family child care providers, can attend; dinner meetings from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. often work well for parents and for teachers in full-day programs.

During meetings:

- Discourage the use of acronyms and professional jargon that can make parents -- and anyone new to the Council -- feel like outsiders; some programs ask participants to put a quarter in a jar every time they use an acronym (and then do something fun with the proceeds).
- Develop a “buddy” or mentoring system that matches experienced parents with new parents, or new parents with experienced professionals.
- Ask parents directly what they think.
- Avoid discussing confidential family information during meetings.

Tips for Including Businesses and Other Community Representatives

According to the Families and Work Institute, businesses are interested in building the economic viability of their communities, and employers are recognizing the importance of addressing “work-life” issues faced by their employees. Given that context, a few strategies for Councils are:

- Recruit businesses that benefit from high quality early care and education or whose employees benefit. For example, real estate agents are concerned about attracting families with young children to their community. An exemplary early care and education system in the community may be a significant draw for young families.
- Businesses that require employees to work second and third shifts might be interested in developing child care programs during non-traditional hours. The Chamber of Commerce and various service organizations are also possibilities
- Provide business representatives with meaningful and concrete ways to be involved in the Council and in CPC programs. People who run a successful business might advise the Council on a variety of issues, such as marketing strategies, software purchases, developing an accounting system or how to prepare for an audit. As part of an effort to promote their business, they might be able to make contributions that help programs directly, such as a field trip to a bakery or other business, the donation of seeds for a spring garden or a prize to the winner of a contest.
- Work with business representatives to develop a plan to improve business involvement in CPC, either through Council membership or other activities. One CPC program developed a video with business assistance to inform other businesses of the benefits of high quality early care and education.

Some good resources for learning more about collaboration, parent, community and business involvement are listed in the Reference section.

III. WORKING WITH CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL AGENCIES

Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs) have been required members of Councils since the inception of the Community Partnerships for Children program, which began as the Chapter 188 program in 1986. A CCR&R can provide valuable support to a partnership program. Across the state, Councils are working with CCR&Rs to meet the early care and education needs of their communities. CCR&Rs are an integral link to providers, parents, employers, and other community members through their participation in local as well as statewide committees and coalitions. They have a broad knowledge of state, regional and local child care needs, gaps in services, trends in child care, professional development opportunities, child care data and developmentally appropriate practice information. CCR&Rs can use their extensive knowledge of other local and state CPC efforts to assist each Council to meet its grant objectives.

Services Available from Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies

Child care information and referral: Information is provided to parents through telephone consultation, face-to-face meetings, mailings, and parenting programs. The services provided include:

- information and counseling on child care options
- information on services for children with disabilities
- information on subsidies and sliding fee scale payments
- intake, subsidy eligibility, and referrals to participating programs
- literature on child care and child development issues
- comprehensive, up-to-date information on licensed and active providers
- outreach and marketing customized for families in each community with sensitivity to linguistic and cultural needs
- bilingual translation and interpretation referrals
- reports to CPC Councils regarding child care supply and demand

Needs assessment: The computerized system run by CCR&Rs contains significant pieces of data required for needs assessments. A CCR&R can assist in implementing the Community Profiles project by providing a comprehensive study of child care needs in a specific community for children under the age of 12. This includes surveying parents, analyzing child care capacity and recommendations for meeting needs including a comprehensive study of salary, benefits and education level of group child care providers.

Technical assistance to providers, parents and the community: CCR&Rs work with the early care and education community to assess professional development needs and goals and stay abreast of trends in the field. The staff can offer assistance to school staff, child care directors and family child care providers through telephone consultations, written materials and meetings. Some examples of the technical assistance available include:

- marketing and recruiting strategies
- supply and demand information
- finding resources for families
- writing contracts, budgeting, record keeping

- working with families of children with disabilities to find appropriate programs and services
- improving communication between providers and parents
- child development information
- wages and benefits for early care and education providers
- calculating the cost of early care and education, tuition and sliding scale fees
- professional development and career counseling

Training for child care providers: CCR&Rs offer a wide spectrum of professional development opportunities for all types of early care and education providers. Using their extensive Speakers Bureau and national contacts, CCR&R staff have the capacity and experience to coordinate, collaborate and manage high quality training events, such as:

- directors' seminars and conferences
- college courses from basic child growth and development to behavior management
- CEU training series
- CDA information sessions and seminars based on CDA functional areas
- workshops, such as Speech and Language Development, Discipline, Working with Families, Developmentally Appropriate Practice, Professionalism and ADHD
- child health care training, first aid and CPR, asthma, lead poison prevention
- infant and toddler development and programs
- parent seminars and workshops
- training offered in languages other than English

Credentials and accreditation: CCR&Rs assist providers seeking credentials such as the CDA, NAFCC Accreditation and NAECP accreditation. Services include:

- informational sessions for providers, parents, boards of directors and CPC Councils
- consultation to centers regarding accreditation
- site and home visits
- preparation for validation visits
- individual advising with providers
- assistance in purchasing culturally and linguistically appropriate curriculum resources
- coordination of various resources for staff development and training

Community education: CCR&Rs work with child care providers, parents, community agencies, businesses, educational and governmental institutions to increase their understanding of the child care system, providing:

- information on child care supply and demand
- professional development initiatives
- linkages with existing programs to address family involvement, parenting education and family literacy
- resource libraries and child care publications

Services for employers: CCR&Rs educate businesses about the benefits of child care and the options available to them through:

- parenting seminars
- customized child care resource and referral services
- onsite child care program start-up assistance
- community needs assessments
- dependent care options

Customized services for families with children with disabilities and providers: In response to the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and regulations promulgated by the Office of Child Care Services, CCR&Rs offer individualized support to parents of children with disabilities in finding and accessing appropriate early care and education by:

- confirming openings in programs that meet specific family needs
- connecting parents with community resources
- following-up and providing ongoing support to both parents and providers

Child care voucher management: Since 1985, the CCR&Rs have been providing voucher services to parents referred through the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) as well as to parents who are eligible based on their income. Some services provided to parents in the area of voucher management are:

- counseling on child development issues
- quality indicators in child care
- referrals to providers
- assistance in payment of child care costs

Examples of One CCR&Rs Work with CPC Programs

The Preschool Enrichment Team, Inc. (P.E.T.), Hampden County's Child Care Resource and Referral Program includes Springfield, Holyoke, Westfield, Chicopee, West Springfield, Agawam, East Longmeadow, Hampden, Wilbraham, Ludlow, Palmer, Monson, Southwick, Tolland, Granville, Chester, Montgomery, Russell, Woronoco and Blandford. P.E.T. provides services to the CPC lead agencies for the above communities. Each Community Partnership purchases child care information and referral services for any family living in its community. This allows P.E.T. to waive the fee and offer child care counseling and referral services at no cost to parents.

Holyoke, Agawam and Springfield CPCs each contract with P.E.T. to screen eligible families for Community Partnerships' slots and refer the families to participating programs. P.E.T. tracks these referrals and reports back to the respective Partnerships.

Each Community Partnership supports P.E.T.'s outreach/marketing efforts by purchasing flyers, pencils, magnets and bookmarks for distribution in the communities. One Council purchased radio and public bus advertisements that resulted in 300 additional parent calls.

P.E.T. pooled resources from three CPCs to fund accreditation consultations for group early care and education programs in their communities. Five CPCs contract with P.E.T. for CDA services. Maximizing these resources, P.E.T. hired a CDA specialist who performs the support services required to complete the CDA credential.

Four Partnerships and P.E.T. co-sponsored three college courses available to providers in those communities, including one in Spanish, attended by teachers, aides, and family child care providers.

Through funding from the *Holyoke* Community Partnership, CCR&R staff translated NAEYC's Early Childhood Classroom Observation booklet and Staff Questionnaire into Spanish. Once this was accomplished, other CPCs in Hampden County were able to benefit from these documents.

The *Springfield* Early Care and Education Partnership, P.E.T. and The Integration Network collaborated to bring a nationally-recognized leader in early childhood for a full-day conference open to all early care and educational professionals.

Massachusetts Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies

Resources for Child Care

152 North Street, Suite 230
Pittsfield, MA 01201
Serving Berkshire County
(413) 443-7830

Child Care Focus

56 Vernon Street
Northampton, MA 01060
Serving Hampshire and Franklin Co.
(413) 582-4218 or (800) 962-5511

Preschool Enrichment Team

1391 Main Street, Suite 822
Springfield, MA 01103-1619
Serving Hampden County
(413) 736-3900

Child Care Resources

76 Summer Street, Suite 345
Fitchburg, MA 01420
Serving Northern Worcester County
(800) 660-6269
(978) 343-7395 Fitchburg
(978) 365 6367 Clinton

Child Care Connection

100 Grove Street, Suite 102
Worcester, MA 01605
Serving Central and Southern
Worcester County
(508) 757-1503 (800) 278-1503

Child Care Circuit

190 Hampshire Street
Lawrence, MA 01840
Serving Essex & Eastern Middlesex
Counties
(978) 686-4288 Lawrence
(978) 921-1631 Beverly

Child Care Search

Concord Office Center, Suite. 102
2352 Main St.
Concord, MA 01742
Serving parts of Middlesex County
(978) 897-6400
or (800)455-8326

Child Care Resource Center

130 Bishop Allen Drive
Cambridge, MA 02139
Serving cities & towns west of Boston
(617) 547-9861 x 72

Child Care Choices of Boston

105 Chauncy Street
Boston, MA 02111
Serving the city of Boston
(617) 542-KIDS (5437)

Community Care for Kids

1509 Hancock Street
Quincy, MA 02169
Serving South Shore area
(617) 471-6473 x105 (800) 637-2011

Home Health and Child Care Services, Inc.

P.O. Box 640 / 15 Jonathan Drive
Brockton, MA 02403-0640
Serving Brockton/Attleboro & surrounding areas
(508) 588-6070

Child Care Works

4 Park Place, Room 101
New Bedford, MA 02740
Serving New Bedford, Fall River and Taunton areas
(508) 999-9930 or (800) 338-1717

Child Care Network of Cape Cod and the Islands

P.O. Box 954 / 115 Enterprise Road
Hyannis, MA 02601
Serving the Cape and the Islands
(508) 778-9470 or (800) 845-1999

New England Farm Workers Council

1628-1640 Main St
Springfield, MA 01103
Serving Springfield Area (413) 781-2145

Franklin Athol Child Care Services

393 Main St., Greenfield, MA 01301
Serving Franklin County
(413) 781-2145

Office of Child Care Services Central and Regional Offices

Central Office (Administration)
One Ashburton Place, Room 1105
Boston, MA 02108
(617) 626-2000

Regions I Western Massachusetts
53 Capital Drive.
West Springfield, MA 01089
(413) 788-8401

Regions II & IV Central Massachusetts
180 Turnpike Road
Westboro, MA 01581
(508) 871-7181

Region III Northeast Massachusetts
66 Cherry Hill Dr., Suite 100
Beverly, MA 01915
(978) 524-0012 or (617) 727-6853

Region V Southeast Massachusetts
109 Rhode Island Road
Lakeville, MA 02347-1439
(508) 947-1133 or (617) 727-1444

Region VI Greater Boston
1515 Hancock St.
Quincy, MA 02169
(617) 472-2881

(As of 1999)

IV. WORKING WITH FAMILY CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

Family child care providers are now required members of a Community Partnerships for Children (CPC) Council. Family child providers are an integral part of the early care and education community. Many families value an intimate setting with fewer children, and are more comfortable leaving their children in a group that feels more like a family than does a center-based program. For parents who speak primarily a language other than English, it may be easier to find a family child care provider who speaks their language than it is to find a center-based program where their native language is spoken.

Across the state CPCs are taking a variety of approaches to incorporate family child care providers into Councils and programs. Below are some ways CPCs are working with family child care providers to expand the choices for families.

How Some Communities Have Worked with Family Child Care Providers

Westfield CPC subcontracts with the Westfield Family Childcare Coalition, a group of independent family child care providers, to provide subsidies for children in family child care homes. A subcontract between the lead agency and the Coalition covers a variety of services, including tuition subsidies; training; supplies and equipment; enrichment programs (e.g., field trips to museums or cultural performances); substitute staffing; and the administrative costs of managing the subcontract. To date the Coalition has established its own policies and procedures within CPC guidelines to ensure quality. The Coalition maintains records and submits invoices to the lead agency. In turn, the lead agency directly reimburses the providers.

The Watertown CPC has a support program for independent family child care providers that enables them to achieve National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC) Accreditation. The program began with one family child care provider designing a support program to assist three other providers through accreditation. In addition, the providers were trained in mentoring skills. As a follow-up, the accredited family child care providers sent out informational packets about NAFCC accreditation to all Watertown family child care providers and took on the responsibility of managing the support program.

The mentor home visiting program enables providers to receive training in their own homes, as needed. In the first phase of the project, high quality materials to use in the home visiting program were produced. Next, standards on the use of the materials at the time of the home visit were developed. Mentors were then trained in a protocol for the home visit. Home visits can be reciprocal -- providers can visit mentors' programs.

The Council decided to continue this model. The Council assists with costs associated with accreditation, the accreditation consultants, mentors, and the development of leadership projects.

The Holyoke Early Childhood Partnership Council offers the Second Helping Seminar series to meet the needs of family child care providers. It is an advanced enrichment course that promotes the growth and development of family child care providers through mentoring, peer training and community involvement. Intended for experienced providers, the seminar offers 32 hours of training divided into four modules: The Provider, The Children, The Family and The Business. The training hours provided by the Second

Helping seminars can be transferred into training hours for both the CDA Credential and NAFCC Accreditation. The series is available in English and Spanish.

A provider who completes the four modules may apply to take a self-study exam to become a "Master Provider." Requirements for Master Provider are rigorous. These providers must be engaged in community involvement on local, state and national levels and must also be members of NAFCC.

The Weymouth Community Partnerships for Children program established a home delivery system of children's books that are age and developmentally appropriate. The program, under the direction of a family literacy coordinator, is funded by the CPC, a local bank and monies from the profits of book fairs.

Currently, 33 family child care providers participate in the "book box" system. Initially, each provider is given a children's audio cassette player along with some literacy materials. Every two weeks participants receive a resource box that holds at least two books on tape, a literacy activity pack, a book and toy combination, and at least six trade books. The boxes are also used as vehicles for disseminating information on literacy activities or articles on child development and literacy. In order to make these deliveries biweekly across town, retired teachers were recruited to take on a delivery route. They have been very dedicated and have devised the record-keeping system for tracking the boxes, the contents and the delivery schedule.

The Oxford Community Partnerships for Children program subcontracts with their local CCR&R, Child Care Connection (CCC), to promote quality early childhood programs. Initially, CCC focused on CDA training. However, they noted during the recruitment process that many of the family child care providers were hesitant to make a commitment, citing a lack of familiarity with CDA as well as with CPC and developmentally appropriate practice. As a result, funding was allocated to a "Quality Building Program" to address this problem and the program was opened to all licensed family child care providers.

The project began with extensive publicity followed by an informational meeting, with incentives offered to participants. (Each provider was given a set of children's books to promote literacy.) Seven family child care providers registered for the 15-hour training program, with each participant being assigned a mentor trained by CCC. Mentor family child providers contacted a provider by telephone at least once every two weeks to work together on areas of concern.

The Quality Building Program meets the goal of improving quality while at the same time motivating providers to participate in further training (e.g., CDA, NAFCC accreditation) and the program has created a stronger network of family child care providers in the Oxford community.

Ashburnham-Westminster, Winchedon, Clinton, Fitchburg, Gardner, Leominster and Templeton CPCs have collaborated with the Early Childhood Department of Mount Wachusett Community College (MWCC) in Gardner to create a CDA seminar course of study for family child care and/or center-based providers. Now in its third year, the program is designed as a 12-month course that concentrates on three phases of learning: Field Experience, Coursework and Evaluation. The program includes 80 hours of

classroom time, 40 hours of approved workshops, conferences and training (sponsored by CCR&Rs and CPCs), First Aid, CPR and the required assessment site visits. Up to thirty-five providers enroll each year.

As part of the evaluation process, MWCC provides assistance for advisors assigned by the national office to complete a minimum of two visits a year, with a third optional visit as needed. Each advisor is assigned two or three candidates to follow throughout the course. Advisors provide mentoring, direction and assessment. The successful candidate obtains his/her CDA along with seven college credits from MWCC.

Chapter VIII, Ensuring Quality through Accreditation and Credentials, contains additional information on working with family child care providers.

V. UNDERSTANDING RESOURCES AND MEETING NEEDS: CONDUCTING A NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF YOUR COMMUNITY

All Community Partnerships for Children proposals must begin with a statement of a community's need for early care and education programs. Conducting a comprehensive needs assessment will assure that the plan proposed is based on documented needs and a knowledge of resources and capacities within the community. The needs assessment provides valuable information and justification for a community's request for CPC funds. The needs assessment assists the Council in highlighting the resources available to respond to demonstrated needs as well as identifying any gaps in current community services.

Authors of the publication *Know Your Community: A Step-by-Step Guide to Community Needs and Resources Assessment* (1995) indicate that strong community assessment requires:

- understanding the current needs of all families in the community
- evaluating the system's ability to support families' healthy growth and development
- building community support for and ownership of a new way of meeting needs

The Role of a Community Needs Assessment

Assessing the community's needs requires not only knowledge about the needs of the target population but also the existing resources available to respond to these needs. For the purposes of the Community Partnerships for Children program, Councils must know about the early care and education needs of the families to be served and about the needs of the providers offering the services. This knowledge will guide the Council in addressing the need and, when indicated, in developing new services. This important information makes it easier for the Council to do program planning, develop an informed proposal and document the need for resources when additional funds become available.

For new programs, the questions asked in the needs assessment should provide information that is critical in forming a CPC program. This standardized needs assessment is the first step in the collecting early care and education data. The needs assessment should include, but not be limited to, items in the charts (see pages 33 and 34). Additional items may be incorporated into the needs assessment if desired. Once collected, this information should form the basis for program planning as well as future data collection efforts.

For existing CPC programs, the information gathered by the annual needs assessments should supplement existing data. In responding to the Department's needs assessment requirements, data should be analyzed in light of existing information collected from past needs assessments and evaluations. Additional items may be included in the needs assessment if a community has a need for other data.

In past years, Councils have conducted their own needs assessments to meet the community's individualized needs for early care and education. Needs assessments were either part of the CPC proposal or initiated at the start of program funding. While the Department realizes that this individualized approach was helpful to communities in

program planning, it has been difficult to analyze certain data elements uniformly across programs. Therefore, the Department is developing a standardized needs assessment process. Standard needs assessment surveys will provide local CPC programs with data for program planning and expansion. They will also assist the Department in its effort to assess the early care and education system statewide so that it may plan for and improve services provided to young children and their families. Standardized needs assessment instruments along with other data reporting forms allow CPC programs to be accountable to the Department, and for the Department to be accountable to the Legislature.

The Community Profiles Project

To standardize data collection, the Department of Education started the Community Profiles Project, completing the initial pilot phase in FY 1999. The intent of Community Profiles is to streamline needs assessment data by providing five standard survey instruments for 1) center-based and Head Start programs, 2) public school programs, 3) family child care programs, 4) school-age programs and 5) families. The data gathered will provide CPC programs and the Department with information on the early care and education needs of families and providers and provide a "snapshot" of the services available in each community. Careful and objective analysis of the data should provide CPC Councils with the information needed for local proposal development and program planning, while providing the Department with data for statewide planning.

A second round of pilot testing during FY 2000 will be open for approximately 60 programs that wish to participate. All CPC program are required to participate in this process in either FY 2000 or FY 2001. For more information on the Community Profiles Project, contact Early Learning Services at (781)-338-6364.

Getting Started

Conducting a needs assessment requires valuable resources, such as time and money. In preparation, the Council members should consider the following:

- What is available in terms of "people power," how much time do they have to commit to the project and what is the size of the community? The Community Profiles project is estimated to require 50 to 150 hours of work for 3 to 5 people, depending on the size of the community and how many providers and parents are surveyed.
- What current, reliable information already exists? What information needs to be gathered and what are the best methods for gathering it? What are the best sources of this information?
- What fiscal resources are available and from what sources? The cost of the Community Profiles project ranges between \$300 and \$5,000 depending on the size of the project and who does the work.

Review existing data collection instruments before developing new ones. There may be instruments available that could be customized to meet your data collection needs. Charts A and B, on the following pages, provide some initial guidance for collecting data. Community Profiles draft surveys, additional sample needs assessment survey forms (for families and for programs/providers) and other information on this topic are available from Early Learning Services upon request.

CHART A: DEMOGRAPHICS SUMMARY (worksheet)

The information needed to complete the chart below may be gathered from the following sources:

- Department of Public Health
- Families with 3- and 4-year-old children (2 years, 9 months -- kindergarten-eligible)
- Early Intervention Programs
- Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies
- Public schools and Head Start programs
- Private programs and family child care providers
- U.S. Census of Population and Housing
- Local community development department

DEMOGRAPHICS		# 3 & 4 year old children
A. Total number of 3- & 4-year old children in the community including those with disabilities (<i>do not count children eligible for public kindergarten</i>)		
B. # of 3- & 4-year old children currently being served in programs (<i>public, private, Head Start or family child care programs</i>)		
C. # of 3- & 4-year old children currently being served in programs <u>who need additional early care/education hours</u>		
D. # of 3-8 & 4-year old children currently unserved (<u>not</u> in a program) <u>who need early care/education</u>		
E. Of the above number of children, how many are from <u>working</u> families?		
F. Of the families who would like a program, how many earn less than 125% of the SMI (state median income)?		
G. Of the children identified in A and who need early care/education, how many are children whose first language is other than English?		
H. # of 3- & 4- year old children <u>with disabilities who need additional child care</u>		

CHART B: SUMMARY OF EXISTING EARLY CARE/EDUCATION PROGRAMS/SERVICES

VI. ENSURING QUALITY: CURRICULUM AND INCLUSION

Curriculum Standards

A great deal of attention and funding has been directed to Education Reform in Massachusetts. The Education Reform Act of 1993 mandated the development of statewide Curriculum Frameworks with high standards for all students in public schools. Curriculum Frameworks for Prekindergarten through Grade 12 in several areas have been developed and approved by the Board of Education.

The Massachusetts Early Childhood Advisory Council to the Board of Education established a subcommittee to examine the Frameworks and develop curriculum standards that would be more easily implemented at the preschool level. The committee was committed to creating standards for preschool curriculum that would align with the state Frameworks and offer preschool children a firm foundation for learning through experiences appropriate to their developmental levels.

Draft checklists have been developed for Mathematics, Science & Technology, Engineering, English Language Arts, History and Social Science, and also in motor and neurosensory development, which are uniquely important to young children. The checklists can be used as self-assessment tools for evaluating the quality of curriculum in preschool programs. Copies of these draft checklists will be made available by Early Learning Services when they are ready.

The curriculum standards for preschool differ from the state Curriculum Frameworks in one important way. The Frameworks provide performance-based standards for student learning in preschool through grade twelve. The preschool standards are system-based rather than performance-based. They describe what early care and education programs need to do to provide young children with the foundations for academic learning.

The concepts that are developed in the preschool years set the stage for later academic learning. However, the way young children learn, and the activities and strategies teachers use to effectively facilitate their learning, are quite different from those typically seen in elementary and secondary schools.

With increasing emphasis on curriculum in the early grades, these standards may help practitioners in articulating to parents, administrators, and the general public, the foundations of learning for young children. The standards are not limited to public school programs. It was the goal of the committee to develop materials that would be useful to all preschool programs and ensure that all young children have experiences that provide foundations for learning regardless of the setting or funding source.

The curriculum standards are based on two important concepts:

- 1) young children learn through play, and need to be provided with many and varied opportunities to explore and experiment with concepts through hands-on activities in a natural environment; and
- 2) exploration and play, when thoughtfully guided by knowledgeable adults, build the foundation for academic learning.

This approach reflects the reality that, although there is a generally predictable sequence of milestones, children may not proceed through these steps in the same way or at the same time. Practitioners need a thorough understanding of child development in order to assess accurately individual needs and plan appropriately. The standards do not dictate curriculum but support curriculum development. Practitioners in all kinds of preschool settings may apply them in a way that best meets the needs of their population by adapting the environment, materials and activities to meet children's individual needs, including children with disabilities.

In addition to developing preschool curriculum standards that link with the state Frameworks, the group is in the process of developing technical assistance guides in the four major disciplines. These will be called *Building Foundations: Technical Assistance Guides to Developing Curriculum for Preschool Programs Based on the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks*. The technical assistance guides will describe the unique aspects of teaching and learning in early childhood along with numerous suggestions for implementation, and ideas for staff development. The technical assistance guides are under development and availability will be announced later in the year.

Building the Foundation of Academic Learning

The foundation for cognitive development and later academic learning emerges from children's natural curiosity and exploration of their environment – both the natural environment and the objects and experiences they encounter at home and in the classroom. Children's exploration of shape, size, position, quantity and relationships builds a base for mathematics. Children's contemplation of their world and observation of the many roles that people play is the beginning of social studies. The foundation of language arts begins with spoken language, builds with an understanding of how language is translated into written symbols and becomes literacy through the decoding and creating of written language. This process is strengthened when children are read to and exposed to a variety of literature on a daily basis.

Children's emotional development is intimately connected to learning. Children need to be in an environment in which they feel safe in order to feel free to explore, express their ideas, take risks and make mistakes. This goes far beyond physical safety. Part of maintaining a high quality early care and education program is teachers' knowledge and understanding of child development coupled with the ability to provide a warm, nurturing, and stimulating environment.

Interactions among children provide opportunities to extend their learning. As children explore, they create hypotheses about why things happen, and predictions about what might happen. Talking with other children allows them to validate or to be challenged in their thinking. Only by relating to others do children learn important social skills, including cooperation, negotiation, self-assertion, self-control, and the ability to share time, attention and materials.

Physical activity and play are vital to learning during the preschool years. Early childhood teachers need to provide many activities that develop the large muscles which support small muscle skills. Through careful observation, teachers can determine when children

need additional help to develop certain skills. To gain control of their bodies, children need to practice movements over and over. A skill must be tried again and again in many variations to lead to generalization, then mastery. For example, once the child learns how to climb in one physical setting he/she must learn to adapt the skill and transfer it to other climbing situations, which requires different degrees of body control.

A comprehensive understanding of human development helps teachers to design activities that work equally well for children operating at varying levels of development (to challenge both children who are ready to move to more advanced levels of learning and children operating at a less complex level of development). Teachers need to know how to guide and facilitate children's play and exploration.

Examples of activities that foster the developmental skills and foundations for learning in various disciplines will be described in *Building Foundations: Technical Assistance Guides to Developing Curriculum for Preschool Programs Based on the Massachusetts Frameworks* (in process).

Inclusion of Children with Disabilities

Inclusion of children with disabilities in a regular classroom is implemented by teachers with expert advice and support from specialists. Classroom environments and activities can be adapted for children with disabilities through teamwork of teachers and specialists.

Implementing a child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) involves thoughtful adaptation of classroom activities to allow the child with disabilities to participate to the fullest extent possible. A teacher plans and adapts curriculum with each individual child's learning goals and style in mind. For example, a teacher might ask : "How will a child with a vision impairment participate in art activity? What adaptations can I make to increase the child's tactile experience? How can a child with delayed cognitive development successfully participate in my counting activity? Would an abacus help the child's comprehension? How can I modify circle time to allow children with short attention spans to participate successfully?" By thinking through activities in this way, major adaptations or specialized materials might not be needed. Creative and simple solutions often suffice and may also benefit the learning of all children in the classroom. For example, a common adaptation to increase literacy learning for children with visual impairments is to create "storyboxes." This involves taking a common book, such as *The Three Little Pigs* and placing props that go along with the story in a box. When the story is read in circle time, the props offer both tactile cues for the words being read and the opportunity to act out the story. For the child with visual impairments, parts of the story that were otherwise available only visually are made concrete and meaningful. At the same time, the props can also stimulate interaction among all children listening to the story.

Classroom teachers team with specialists and parents in order to gain specific knowledge about children and to gain professional expertise that will help with inclusion. For example, parents can offer unique insights into their child's behavior and temperament; an occupational therapist might provide input about feeding utensils to give a child optimal independence during snack or lunch; an orientation and mobility specialist could provide techniques for increasing playground participation.

Transitions for Children with Disabilities: There are many points of transition in the lives of young children. For preschool-aged children, the transition into the preschool classroom and then into kindergarten are key points that can affect their success in the next step in their education. For young children with disabilities, these points of transition may be even more difficult. Transition planning by professionals and parents is necessary when children with disabilities move from Early Intervention (EI) Programs to community early childhood programs and from preschool programs into kindergarten.

A child in an EI program who is eligible for special education services must have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) in place, with special education services provided by the school district in accordance with the IEP, by a child's third birthday. Agencies involved with these children have joint responsibilities for developing and implementing a process for transition that includes children, their families and the agencies. A formal transition policy can facilitate this process. Extended evaluation (formerly known as diagnostic evaluation) which may take up to 8 weeks to conduct is **not** appropriate (unless there is no prior knowledge of the child's needs) and unnecessary when a transition policy is in place.

An interagency policy among the Department of Public Health (Early Intervention Programs), the Administration for Children and Families (Head Start) and the Department of Education (early childhood special education starting at age three) is available upon request from Early Learning Services. This policy outlines the responsibilities of different parties and includes guidance for successful transitions.

There are also federal regulations for IDEA 97, released March 12, 1999, that pertain to transitions. These regulations require that Early Intervention notify the local education agency (LEA) in which a child with a disability resides when the child is approaching the age of three, and convene, with family approval, a transition planning conference. The conference should include the EI program, the family and the LEA and be held at least 90 days before the child's third birthday. At the discretion of the parties this conference may be held up to 6 months before the child's third birthday (§ 300-132). The regulations are available online at www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS.

The Department of Education's Early Learning Services has developed and collected a number of resources to support inclusive early childhood programs. These resources are available on request.

VII. EVALUATING A COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS FOR CHILDREN PROGRAM

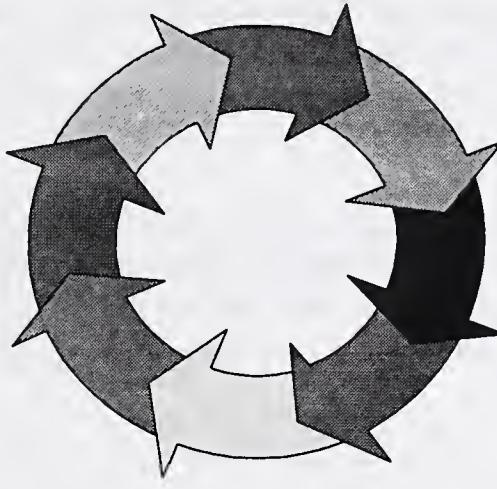
Evaluation is a key component of high quality early childhood programs. Community Partnerships for Children programs are required to conduct annual evaluations of each CPC objective.

The Evaluation Process

Evaluation is the third component of a three-part circular process.

Needs Assessment

Implementation



Evaluation

The process begins with a needs assessment. A program change or intervention is then designed, which is tried out during the implementation phase to respond to the identified need. For example, needs assessment data indicated that more affordable preschool slots are needed in a particular community. The Council creates fifteen subsidized placements to address the need. This is the intervention or implementation phase. The assumption behind the intervention is that if the new classroom with subsidized placements is created, the demand for affordable preschool programs is large enough that families will use the subsidies. Once the intervention has been created and implemented, its effectiveness should be evaluated.

The Importance of Evaluation Data

The most valuable part of an evaluation is what is learned. Below is a list of ways to use evaluation data:

- Budget Allocation – An evaluation helps determine where to allocate CPC dollars based on need or identified gaps in services, such as number of children and program capacity in a community.
- Program planning – Evaluation data are important in setting long range goals for your program. For example, “By the year 2005, 75% of the center-based programs in our community will be accredited.”
- Program monitoring – An evaluation will help gauge the achievement of goals and objectives by monitoring the success of the activities/services, such as the actual number of children served from the OCCS waiting list versus the proposed number in the goal
- Fund leveraging – Evaluation data help identify problems and organize efforts. This process provides a clear direction for solutions. Private dollars, such as funds from foundations or local government, can be leveraged to help achieve solutions.

Evaluation Questions

Evaluating CPC programs is done within the context of the five program objectives: 1) to increase affordability and accessibility; 2) to enhance collaboration; 3) to provide comprehensive and high quality early childhood programs; 4) to provide high quality programs and 5) to provide community outreach.

One way to begin an evaluation is to group the activities/services within the five CPC objectives. When evaluating each activity/service, ask the following questions:

- What data led you to identify the need or problem?
- What services did you create to address the need?
- What are your assumptions in creating this particular service?
- Do the data indicate that those assumptions were correct?
- Have you collected, or are there any existing, data that indicate whether or not the need has been met?

Answers to these questions will provide an understanding as to whether the assumptions on which changes or interventions are based are correct and how effective (or ineffective) the changes are. The information is then used to modify the service to achieve better results. Chart A on the next page organizes the evaluation process. Using this format may

make it easier to develop an evaluation plan that addresses each objective of the CPC program.

Evaluation data are an integral component of the operation of CPC programs. The data should be used for ongoing program improvement, program planning and development and for developing benchmarks. The box below provides some questions to consider when conducting evaluations.

Tips for conducting an evaluation:

Conducting an evaluation requires planning, time and resources. When preparing for an evaluation, Councils should consider the following:

- determine who will conduct the evaluation;
- establish timelines;
- develop a budget;
- identify potential audience;
- determine data elements and methodology for data collection.

Community Partnerships for Children
Evaluation and Strategic Planning

Objective __ :

Data that led you to identify the need or problem?	Activities and/or Services	Assumptions	Are your assumptions still correct?	What data already exists, have you collected or will you need to collect to tell you if you have solved the problem?

Other Questions to Consider as You Complete the Chart:

Time frame for data collection?

Should an outside consultant do the evaluation?

Is this a local or systemic problem?

SECTION II:
Accountability and Consistency
in Your
Community Partnerships for Children
Program

VIII. ENSURING QUALITY THROUGH ACCREDITATION AND CREDENTIALS

High quality programs are needed to provide young children with the foundations for learning and future achievement. Under Community Partnerships, substantial attention has been directed toward ensuring and enhancing program quality. CPC programs should seek to involve all early care and education programs that want to participate. The goal is to ensure that as many programs as possible are accredited, working on improving quality and willing to accept CPC eligible children.

Program Standards: All programs receiving funds through Community Partnerships for Children (CPC) must meet the standards that apply to their particular program. Center-based community programs must be licensed by the Massachusetts Office of Child Care Services (OCCS). Head Start programs must meet federal Head Start standards in addition to being licensed by OCCS. Family child care programs must be licensed by OCCS. Programs operated by public schools need to meet the Department of Education's (DOE) *Early Childhood Standards for Programs for Three-and Four-Year Olds*, which are legislatively mandated to meet or exceed the OCCS standards.

Some private school preschool programs are exempt from OCCS licensing if more than fifty percent of their enrollment is above the kindergarten level. If children are to attend these programs supported by CPC, the programs must follow DOE's *Standards* and must seek accreditation (see below).

Because OCCS Standards for Licensure were recently revised, DOE's *Early Childhood Standards for Programs for Three-and Four-Year Olds* must be revised accordingly. Recommendations for the revised DOE *Standards* are being developed by the Massachusetts Early Childhood Advisory Council, an interagency group representing a variety of agencies and organizations involved in early care and education for children with and without disabilities. In its revision process, the Council studied the various standards of Head Start, Office of Child Care Services, the accreditation criteria of the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs, and DOE standards. This revision is currently underway. Until the revision is approved by the Board of Education, existing *Early Childhood Standards for Programs for Three- and Four- Year Olds* (1988) remain in effect. Copies of these *Standards* may be obtained by contacting Early Learning Services.

Accreditation/Credentials: Legislation M.G.L. Chapter 15, Section 54 requires that **all** Community Partnerships for Children recipients (public school programs, center-based community programs and family child care programs) seek accreditation or credentials to ensure high-quality early care and education. Public school and center-based programs must seek accreditation by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs (NAECP), a division of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Family child care providers must be licensed by the Office of Child Care Services and seek **either** the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential **or** accreditation from the National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC). Individual family child care providers who hold an Associate's degree or higher in early childhood are exempt from the CDA/NAFCC requirement.

Associated costs (consultants, training, materials, supplies) for accreditation and the CDA are acceptable expenses that may be paid entirely or in part by the CPC grant. Community Partnership for Children Councils' bylaws must include a policy outlining support, training and timelines for the accreditation/CDA process.

Accreditation by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs

NAECP accreditation is a process in which a program's administrators, staff and parents join with representatives of the Academy to determine whether that program meets nationally recognized criteria for quality. Massachusetts currently ranks first in the nation in the number of programs accredited, with 596 programs accredited and 1,134 pursuing accreditation as of September 15, 1999.

Community Partnership for Children Councils need to inform all CPC programs seeking accreditation of the following:

- Programs that serve children funded by CPC are required to seek NAECP accreditation and must complete the accreditation process within three years of January 2000 or initial funding by CPC if funding starts after January 2000.
- Programs that are deferred by NAECP will have an additional year to address the issues that led to the deferral, and then reapply.
- Programs that are not able to reapply for accreditation within the allowed time frame must apply directly to the Department of Education (Early Learning Services) for a waiver. The waiver request should include:
 - a detailed explanation of why the program is not accredited
 - a proposed plan to achieve accreditation within twelve months
 - a description of the support that is needed to achieve the plan
- Programs that do not complete accreditation within the timelines described above will not be eligible to receive CPC funds to serve children until they achieve accreditation.
- The CPC grant may pay for accreditation and renewal costs.

NAECP Accreditation Process

1. Program contacts NAECP to request an application by calling (800) 424-2460.
2. Program submits application and appropriate fee to:

National Academy of Early Childhood Programs, c/o NAEYC
1509 16th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036-1426
202-232-8777 or 800-424-2460
<http://www.naeyc.org>

NAECP Application Fee Schedule

Enrollment	Application Fee
Level 1 □ 60 or fewer children	\$125
Level 2 □ 61 to 120 children	\$200
Level 3 □ 121 to 240 children	\$250
Level 4 □ 241 to 360 children	\$300
For each additional 120 children over 360	additional \$50

3. Program conducts the self-study under the direction of the program administrator. The self-study is a comprehensive internal evaluation that involves both staff and parents in self-examination of how well their program meets the NAEYC quality criteria. This procedure consists of four parts:
 - The *Early Childhood Classroom Observation Scale* is used by teachers and administrators to rate the quality of:
 - interactions among staff and children
 - the physical environment
 - curriculum implementation
 - the mechanisms for protecting children's health and safety
 - The *Administrative Report* is used by the administrator to examine the administrative aspects of the program including such topics as:
 - staff qualifications/staff development
 - staffing patterns
 - personnel policies
 - operating procedures
 - family involvement
 - health and safety
 - nutrition and food service
 - evaluation
 - The *Staff Questionnaire* includes questions on personnel policies, administration, and program implementation and is completed by all staff who work with children.
 - The *Parent Questionnaire* is completed by parents to evaluate the program, particularly the interactions between staff and parents.

Commonly Asked Questions on the Self-Study Process

How is the self-study used? The self-study is used to systematically evaluate the program, identifying strengths of the program as well as any areas that need improvement.

What are the benefits of the self-study? The self-study helps program staff analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the program and make needed improvements (materials, equipment, staff training, etc.). Working on the common goal of improving quality can motivate staff, strengthen teamwork among staff and enhance professionalism. Improvements made in the program can result in improved services for children and families and may result in cost savings.

Who completes the self-study? **Everyone** involved in the early childhood program completes the self-study (administrator(s), parents, teachers, assistants, therapists, and any other personnel involved in the program). The administrator takes a key role in overseeing each aspect of the study.

How much time does the self-study process take? The length of time for the self-study process varies among programs. It depends upon the strengths, areas of need and the size of the program. **The accreditation process must be completed by January 2003 or three years from the date of the initial funding by CPC.**

4. Program submits validation fee and materials. The program description is sent to NAECP with request for a validation visit.

NAECP Validation Fee Schedule

Enrollment	Validation Fee
Level 1: 60 or fewer children	\$300
Level 2: 61 to 120 children	\$450
Level 3: 121 to 240 children	\$575
Level 4: 241 to 360 children	\$700
For each additional 120 children over 360	additional \$50

5. NAECP contacts the program administrator to set up the validation visit and to request any additional information if necessary.
6. Program receives a visit from a trained validator(s). The validator verifies whether the information contained in the written program description is an accurate reflection of the day-to-day operation of the program. The length of the visit is determined by the size of the program. Validators do not make decisions regarding accreditation but provide NAECP with information on the accuracy of the program description. The validator submits the program description to NAECP.

7. NAECP Commissioners consider program description. A commission comprised of early childhood professionals reviews the program description and makes a decision regarding accreditation.
8. Program receives NAECP'S decision. The commission's decision report is sent to the program with either a certificate indicating accreditation or specific information regarding a decision to defer with recommendations for improvements. Deferred programs may appeal NAECP's accreditation decision and/or complete necessary changes and request another validation visit.
9. Program maintains accreditation by submitting an annual report reflecting needs assessment, goal setting and periodic evaluation data related to NAEYC criteria.
10. Program renews accreditation every 3 years. To remain accredited the program conducts a self-study and requests a validation visit that assures continuation of quality.

NAECP ACCREDITATION PROCESS RECOMMENDED TIMELINES

Child Development Associate Credential

The Child Development Associate Credential (CDA) for Family Child Care Programs, including bilingual specialization, sponsored by the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition Program, is a process by which caregivers demonstrate their ability to meet CDA competency standards. Documentation of active CDA status or exemption should be kept on file. The same timelines outlined above also apply to achieving the CDA credential.

The CDA credential is designed for qualified caregivers who work with children from birth to age five. CDA candidates demonstrate their ability to nurture children's physical, social, emotional and intellectual growth in a child development framework based on a set of competency standards divided into the following goals:

- establish and maintain a safe, healthy learning environment
- advance physical and intellectual competence
- support social and emotional development and provide guidance
- establish positive and productive relationships with families
- ensure a well-run, purposeful program responsive to participant needs
- maintain a commitment to professionalism

Family child care providers acquire the CDA credential by working with an advisor and then undergoing verification/observation by a representative of the CDA Council.

The *CDA Direct Assessment* is designed for candidates who already have child care work experience in combination with some training in early childhood education, for which candidates must meet eligibility requirements.

The following steps relate to the **Direct Assessment process:**

1. Candidate decides to pursue the CDA credential for family child care.
2. Family child care provider initiates contact with the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition to request an application on the CDA credential process.
The cost of the formal education hours will vary according to where the training is obtained. Scholarships are available through the Office of Child Care Services for the Direct Assessment Fee.
3. CDA candidate begins the credential process.
 - selects and works with an advisor
 - begins documenting his/her competence in a resource file and through parent questionnaires
 - completes 120 hours of training
 - has formal observation by CDA advisor
4. CDA candidate submits completed forms and documentation to Council for Professional Recognition

5. CDA candidate receives information from the Council. Council sends candidate an assigned date and place for written assessment and oral interview that is conducted by a Council representative.
6. Council reviews documentation and successful candidates receive CDA credential.
7. Candidate renews credential. The renewal fee is \$50.00 with the first renewal three (3) years after receiving the credential and every five (5) years thereafter.
8. CPC grant may fund application and renewal.

Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition
2460 16th Street, NW, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20009-3575
(800) 424-4310 or (202) 265-9090 or (202) 265-9161

CDA Fee Schedule: Application packet: \$17.75
Direct Assessment fee: \$325.

The National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) Accreditation

The National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC), is a national accreditation for family child care providers in six content areas: relationships, environment, activities, developmental learning goals, safety and health, and professional business practices. The same timelines and requirements listed above for NAECP accreditation apply to NAFCC accreditation.

This accreditation system is designed to ensure quality in family child care by strengthening the profession of family child care. The Quality Standards have been developed through a three-year, consensus-building process. NAFCC Accreditation defines standards of quality for the field of family child care. The following steps relate to the provider procedures for NAFCC Accreditation:

1. Candidate decides to pursue accreditation and meets the eligibility requirements:
 - Offers care to children in a home
 - Is the primary caregiver (children are not left with a substitute for more than 20% of the time)
 - Is at least 21 years of age (waiver may be available for those in a long-term training)
 - Has a high school diploma or GED
 - Has 18 months experience as a family child care provider (at the time of the observation visit)
 - Has 65 hours of documented training or a current CDA certificate (completed before the observation visit)

2. Family child care provider initiates contact with the National Association for Family Child Care to request an application packet on the accreditation process.

NAFCC Fee Schedule: NAFCC members: \$495
non-members: \$695.

The membership fee is \$25.

The candidate completes the application forms and mails to the NAFCC with the Self-Study Fee (first half of the accreditation fee: \$247.50). Include membership fee as applicable.

3. Candidate begins the process:

- Begins self-study process (NAFCC sends self-study packet);
- Uses Self-Study Workbook to assess self and program. Candidate designs own professional development plan to prepare for observation visit.;
- Involves parents in some way in preparing for accreditation;
- Makes all needed quality improvements.

4. Candidate sends the request for Observer Visit and the Accreditation Observation Fee to NAFCC (second half of Accreditation fee: \$247.50). NAFCC sends Self-Observation Packet to provider and Observer Packet to observer. The next steps are taken:

- Completes Self-Observation;
- Distributes Parent Surveys and collect them for observer;
- Completes observation visit and interview.

5. Candidate sends observer evaluation to NAFCC. (Observer will send his or her own materials to NAFCC.)

6. Candidate receives notification from NAFCC when materials are received and when accreditation decision is made.

7. The accreditation process must be completed within three years of January 2000 or within three years of initial funding if CPC funding starts after January 2000.

8. Provider renews accreditation status every three years.

National Association for Family Child Care

525 S.W. 5th Street, Suite A

Des Moines, Iowa 50309-4501

Teletelephone: 515-282-8192 or 1-800-359-3817

Fax: 515-282-9117

Email: nafcc@nafcc.org, Web Address: <http://www.nafcc.org>

IX. IMPLEMENTING THE SLIDING FEE SCALE

All families receiving services under Phase III of Community Partnerships for Children must pay a fee in accordance with the Commonwealth's Subsidized Child Care Sliding Fee Scale (see scale on pages 64 and 65). It is recommended that Phase I and II programs use the sliding fee scale also. Over time, the implementation of a state sliding fee scale is intended to create a more equitable early care and education system. We anticipate that in future years all early care and education programs receiving state funds will operate with a sliding fee scale. The scale is designed to ensure that all families pay an equitable rate that is consistent with their income and family size.

The CPC program currently uses the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Subsidized Child Care Sliding Fee Scale (1992) to determine parent fees. Parent fees are an integral part of the total cost of early care and education. Therefore, in order to determine the overall program budget, the amount of money expected to be generated from parent fees will need to be calculated. This amount, together with the CPC award, will be the CPC program budget. To estimate the amount of money that may be generated from the sliding fee scale, refer to the "Worksheet for Estimating Income from Parent Sliding Fees" (see below).

The newly revised Sliding Fee Scale goes into effect May 1, 2000. Prior to that time, the Department will release guidance on implementing the new scale. CPC programs should be planning now for potential budget impact, appropriate adjustments to parent fees and resulting need to revise subcontracts. Based on initial analysis, in most cases parent fees will be reduced.

Program Eligibility Guidelines

Children on the Office for Child Care Services' waiting list are given first priority. If there are none, children in working families whose incomes are below 125% of the state median income for their family size are the next priority.

1. Definitions

- *Children on the OCCS waiting list:* Preschool-aged children on the Office for Child Care Services' waiting list for income-eligible child care. Serving children on OCCS waiting list in CPC programs is a priority in FY 2000. Parents who are in training or education programs as well as those who are working are eligible for tuition assistance under this priority.
- *Children of working parents:* "... any child of a two-parent family in which both parents work either full-time or part-time, and any child of a single-parent family in which the parent works either full-time or part-time; provided, however, that a child of working parents admitted to a program shall be allowed to remain in that program for the remainder of the year regardless of whether said child's parents continue to be working parents" (M.G.L. Chapter 15, Section 54). Guardians, grandparents, and surrogate caregivers are included in this definition in addition to biological mothers and fathers.

- *Parent with a disability*: A parent with a disability should be considered equivalent to a working parent. Disability income or other earnings are counted as income.
- *Working parents who lose or leave their jobs*: If a parent is no longer employed **after** the child is enrolled in a program, the child may remain in the program for the remainder of the fiscal year (through June 30). Continued hours of programming and fees should be determined on an individual basis.
- *Children of retired parents*: If one or both of a child's parents is retired, the retirement status of the parent(s) is equivalent to a working status. Retirement benefits are calculated as income.
- *Children of working parents with undocumented citizenship*: If the parents are working and are income eligible, the children are CPC eligible. Atypical methods of documenting income might have to be used. These might include, for example, a letter from an employer.

2. Eligibility Criteria: Additional policies regarding applicant priority and acceptance not covered by this Guide may need to be established for program admission. These policies (such as how to maintain a waiting list and in what order children are placed) should be developed by the CPC Council.
3. Eligibility of Faith-Based Programs: CPC may fund children in these programs if there is not a religious curriculum and the following conditions are met:
 - the program is open to all children;
 - the program is the parent's choice. (A faith-based program may not be the **only** program offered for a parent to receive assistance through CPC.); and
 - the program must be licensed by OCCS and agree to seek accreditation.

It is critical to maintain confidentiality regarding parent fees. Eligibility under the CPC program may raise issues of equity within the early care and education community. For example, several children may attend the same early care and education program with some families paying a sliding fee while others pay no fee or a different fee. Eligibility under CPC Phase III is for working families with the exception of the families on the OCCS waiting list, while eligibility under other programs or Phases may not have a working family/sliding fee scale requirement. In addition, some early care and education programs, such as Head Start, have their own eligibility criteria.

Financial Eligibility Guidelines

1. Family income level and family size
 - Working families who have incomes below 125% of the state median income level are eligible (see chart, 125% Yearly State Median Income by Family Size).
 - Parents pay fees according to their income **and** family size and number of children they currently have in early care and education and after-school programs.

2. Determining sliding fee scale payment

- Verification of a family's income is necessary to determine the sliding fee scale payment (see suggested form, *Community Partnerships Child Care Fee Agreement*). All families whose children attend private and public preschool programs, including Head Start and family child care programs, under the CPC program are required to pay a fee. A record should be kept on each family who applies to participate in the program. These records should include copies of documents that verify each child's status as "eligible" or "not eligible." All records must be maintained for seven years after the end of the grant year to which they relate.
- Pay stubs from the employer(s) for the most recent four-week period should be used to determine the fee that parents are responsible for paying. Some other acceptable documentation of parents' income includes canceled checks, letters, and photocopies of court orders, award letters, and government assistance notifications. The most recent tax returns or quarterly tax payment forms should be used in cases where parents are self-employed or seasonally-employed.
- If the actual cost of a particular child care program is less than the amount a parent would be required to pay according to the sliding fee scale, the CPC Council should propose a fee. For families who earn over 125% of the state median income, Councils may elect to engage in fundraising activities to assist these families with the cost of early care and education. Parents must not be charged a fee higher than the amount listed on the sliding fee scale.

Note the following exceptions:

Children with disabilities: State and federal law require that special education services be provided to children with disabilities starting at birth through the Early Intervention Program under the Department of Public Health, and through public schools starting at age three, at no cost to the parent. Therefore, no fee may be charged for a child with disabilities who is attending a preschool program as part of his/her Individualized Educational Program (IEP). However, a child might be in two separate preschool programs where one program provides educational services as described on the IEP and the other program provides extended day care to allow the parent to work. The family will then be expected to pay a fee for the program the child is attending that is not part of his/her special education program. Likewise, if the child is in a full-day placement, but the IEP calls only for a half-day program, parents would pay a fee for the second half of the day.

Children in foster care: In conformity with the Office of Child Care Services (OCCS) policy, people who care for a child living in Department of Social Services (DSS)-arranged foster care are exempt from paying a fee. A DSS stipend is not considered income. This applies to working foster parents only. Family members (**grandparents**, etc.) who assume temporary or permanent custody of children related to them should be waived the fee for child care. They must be working (or retired); their income level is not relevant.

Children of parents with a disability: In a case in which the parent is disabled, exceptions may be made by the Council regarding fees. Disability payments may be counted as income.

Policy guidelines

1. All participating programs, including public school programs, using Phase III funds must charge families a sliding scale fee (tuition).
2. Fee assessment is based on the Commonwealth's Sliding Fee Scale.
 - Fees should be assessed in full weekly increments based upon a daily fee. Consistent with the OCCS definition²-- full-time is 25 hours or more per week and can be calculated in one or more ways: e.g., three nine-hour days; five five-hour days, etc. Part-day is either up to three hours a day ($\frac{1}{4}$ the daily fee) or between three and five hours a day ($\frac{1}{2}$ the daily fee).
 - If a child attends less than five days on a regular weekly schedule, the family's sliding fee should be figured accordingly. It is advantageous for the Council to have a policy regarding how to determine parent fees for children who attend part time.

Partial week attendance of one child does not preclude the enrollment of additional children in a given five-day "slot."

- For working families with more than one child enrolled in an early care and education program:
 - first child - fee payment in full based on sliding fee scale;
 - second child - $\frac{1}{2}$ fee;
 - third child - $\frac{1}{4}$ fee, etc.

This policy can be used to determine the parent's fee even when siblings are enrolled in non-CPC early care and education and/or school-age programs. The CPC child can be considered first, second or third based on what is most beneficial for the family.

3. Enrollment in two programs

- If a child attends two separate programs (e.g., a Head Start program in the morning and a program funded by CPC in the afternoon), the family is only responsible for paying a sliding fee for the hours the child is in the CPC program.
- If a child is funded by CPC to attend two separate programs (e.g., a public school preschool in the morning and a family child care home in the afternoon), the family should never pay a fee higher than the full day fee listed on the sliding fee scale.

2 Effective May 1, 2000, a new OCCS policy changes the definition of full -and part-time. Full -time will be defined as 30 or more hours. For CPC purpose, anything less than 30 hours will be considered part-time. Additional guidance regarding policies will be released in Spring 2000.

4. Policy regarding payment of fees

Policies regarding such issues as fees paid during family vacation, parent/child illness, school vacation weeks, maternity leave, etc. should be decided by CPC Councils. The goal of such policies should be the equitable provision of services to parents, flexibility in meeting families' needs, and the promotion of uniformity in the community. It is advised that CPCs follow the published payment policies of their participating providers' programs.

5. Establishing Rates

The original practice of Community Partnerships was that lead agencies would pay for services that they provide and be reimbursed for a portion of these costs (e.g., actual preschool teachers' salaries, classroom rent), depending on the number of CPC children enrolled in the program. This remains the budgeting practice for services provided by the lead agency. For private preschools, child care centers and family child care providers, subcontracts based on a per-child tuition from private fee-paying parents or a per-child state rate for contracted or voucher care should be developed.

As the CPC program has evolved, two options have emerged for establishing rates. These are described below as 1) the published rate and 2) the uniform community rate. Councils may decide which rate system works best for their CPC program. However, Councils must choose one system and be consistent in how it is applied to all subcontracted providers. In the case where the parent of a child residing in one CPC community requires services in another community, the "sending" CPC should follow the rate structure of the "receiving" CPC when reimbursing tuition. In each of the options described below, families' income eligibility is assessed and fees determined at least annually. Individual providers are responsible for collecting, depositing and tracking parent fees and reporting them to the lead agency on request. Lead agencies should be confident that each provider's bookkeeping system has the capacity to manage grant funds, parent fees and other income sources.

- Accountability requirements: Whichever method is chosen, providers must submit the CPC standardized monthly attendance records to the lead agency. Providers should also propose or report to the Council at least annually how the retained parent fees would be or were expended (supplies, training, etc.) and how use of the fees meets CPC objectives.
- Published Rate -- A published rate is either a provider's private tuition rate or a provider's state rate. Providers cannot establish a separate CPC rate that would be higher than either their private rate or the state rate. A participating provider must submit to the lead agency documentation of its published rate, i.e., brochure, parent handbook. To be reimbursed for services and establish the exact payment due from the CPC grant, the provider submits records to the lead agency of attendance, full- or part-time status, provider rate and the amount of the parent fee. The parent fee would then be subtracted from the published rate to establish the amount due from the grant. (Standardized forms to document attendance, rates, parent fees are available from Early Learning Services.)
- Uniform Community Rate -- In communities where providers charge a range of

rates, some CPC Councils have decided on an average, uniform per-child rate that will be paid to all participating providers. All providers must agree to accept the rate in order for a CPC to use a uniform community rate. Different uniform community rates could be set for center-based providers and family child care providers, or a community could have one rate for all. Additionally, providers are still required to determine a parent's fee according to the sliding fee scale. Providers may only keep the parent fees up to 10% of the uniform community rate and must be able to account for how these fees are used to benefit the program. The remainder of parent fees in excess of 10% should be deposited in a revolving account with the lead agency for Council discretion.

If the uniform community rate is chosen, the Council must:

- 1) justify its decision, including a rationale and the methodology used for determining the rate. This information should be submitted to Early Learning Services either in the CPC proposal or at the time the Council determines a uniform community rate;
- 2) notify Early Learning Services if the Council decides to no longer adhere to this option;
- 3) review how providers spend their retained parent fees up to 10% of the uniform community rate; and
- 4) determine how the funds from the parent fees that are in excess of 10% of the uniform community rate will be spent.

If a CPC is using some system other than the rate options described above, the Council must submit its rationale and methodology to Early Learning Services. For further guidance on establishing a uniform community rate as well as using budget tracking and attendance forms, contact Early Learning Services.

6. Data on Families

Information on families must be on file or reported to the Department of Education, such as general income level. Social security numbers should be requested, but cannot be required for the child to participate in CPC. Parents must be informed of that fact and that the data is used only to ensure the state can procure maximum child care funds.

7. Cross Community Placements

CPC programs are expected to support the placement of resident children outside the home community if that is the parent's choice. Children residing in a community that has a CPC program may attend programs in other communities and be supported by the CPC program under the condition that the "receiving" programs are willing to become accredited and abide by any other CPC guidelines.

If the "receiving" community has a CPC program, the two CPC programs should develop a cross-community agreement that lays out how these situations will be

handled. If the “receiving” program belongs to a CPC, the program continues to follow guidelines and policies of its own CPC. There are a few possible options for payment.

If the “receiving” community does not have a CPC program, the CPC program in the “sending” community may subcontract directly with the provider as long as the provider is willing to seek accreditation and abide by any other quality requirements. The program should be extended appropriate opportunities to benefit from the CPC program run by the “sending” community (e.g., training, supplies), but the program may decide for themselves their degree of involvement in other aspects of the CPC program in the sending community. Payment is made directly from the lead agency to the provider. Parent fees would be paid directly to the provider. The published rate of the provider would be used unless the provider agreed to be paid on some other basis.

If there is an eligible child in a community without a CPC program who wants to attend a program in a community with a CPC program, that CPC program may support that child in one of their participating programs as long as there is not a waiting list of residents and it is approved by the Council.

A child or family should not be given lower priority for placement simply because their preferred choice for placement is outside of the sending community. Many parents work in other communities and may prefer to keep their children near to where they work. Examples of cross-community agreements are available on request from Early Learning Services.

Bookkeeping Guidelines

1. Responsibilities

- Parent fees generated from the sliding fee scale should be deposited intact by the provider. These fees, when combined with the grant subsidy, contribute to the operating budget of individual early care and education programs. Thus, each program should have an accounting system in place that accurately records the full amount of parent fees collected and deposited consistent with the CPC program requirements. It is not the responsibility of the lead agency to collect fees from CPC families except when direct services are provided by the lead agency.
- All records on family eligibility and fee collections must be maintained by the individual early care and education program in which a child was enrolled for seven years from the last day of the grant award.

2. Suggested Accounting Systems

- Head Start: A Head Start program needs to collect fees for placements funded by CPC. Parent fees collected for CPC placements should be deposited into the parent agency account earmarked for the Head Start CPC program (e.g., in the Community Action Program (CAP) account).
- School districts: School districts may establish a revolving account for accounting purposes. The 1982 amendment to General Laws Chapter 71, Section 47 (amended by Chapter 173 of the Acts of 1982) allows a School Committee to establish a revolving

account for fees received in conjunction with any activity not expressly provided for in Chapter 71.

The pertinent part of the statute, as amended, reads as follows:

All receipts by the [school] committee in connection with ... any other activity not expressly provided for in this chapter [M.G.L. c. 71] but sponsored by the school committee in which participation is contingent upon the payment of a fee by the participant, shall be deposited with the treasurer of such town or, in cases where the town is a member of a regional school district and held as a separate account and expended by said school committee without further appropriation, notwithstanding the provisions of section fifty-three of chapter forty-four.

Communities may wish to consult further legislation under Chapter 71, Section 71E (added by St.1977, c.639) which could enable such funds to be held for the specific purposes of the program/programs from which the receipts were derived. If you have questions about this option, contact the Department of Revenue, Division of Local Services at (617) 626-2300 for advice.

- Child care programs: Child care programs that currently collect parent fees according to the Commonwealth's Sliding Fee Scale may follow their established accounting system providing it properly reflects the actual flow of funds. Funds that do not come directly from the Commonwealth, such as parent fees, may be used by CPC programs at any time. Revenue from parent fees, fundraising or other private sources are exempt from the June 30 spending deadline.

WORKSHEET for ESTIMATING INCOME from PARENT SLIDING FEES - FY 2000

If your CPC Council has recent data that allow accurate projections of parent fee income, please use that data. If not, this worksheet offers one method for calculating an estimate of parent fee income. That estimated figure combined with your Community Partnerships request should be the total budget for the project. Monies generated from other sources, e.g., special education, Title I, grants, have not been factored into this analysis.

STEP 1: Family Data/Income Profile in Community/Communities:

The municipal Community Development Department should assist with the collection of this data. Priority should be given to families below 125% of the state median income level although it is expected that working families from all income levels will participate in the Community Partnerships program. Refer to the chart, 125% Yearly State Median Income by Family Size.

Number of families below the 125% state median income (SMI) level: _____

Median Income* in Community/Communities: _____

*Note: If a community's overall median income is above 125% of the SMI, a community may choose to use an income figure below the community's median income based on income of the population it expects to serve.

STEP 2: Estimate of Number of Children to be Served:

Number of additional 3 and 4 year olds to be served with Community Partnerships funds and sliding fee scale revenue: _____

Number in part-day programs (up to 3 hours a day): _____ ; Number in part-day programs (3 hours up to 5 hours a day): _____ ; Number in full-day programs (>25 hrs./wk.): _____

STEP 3: Estimate of Parent's Weekly Fee:

Divide the community's median income figure (step 1) by 12 to arrive at a monthly median income figure. A community would need to have families under the state median income in order to generate sliding fee scale revenues.

Community median income _____ / 12 = _____

Refer to Commonwealth of Massachusetts Subsidized Child Care Sliding Fee Scale. Use the Column for Family of Four and locate income figure closest to monthly median income figure. Then look at the Weekly Column for that income level to determine an estimate for parent's weekly fee.

Parent weekly fee based on community median income figure: _____

STEP 4: Estimate of Total Amount of Parent Fees Generated Per Week:

_____ # of children attending part-day (up to 3 hours) x weekly fee = _____

_____ # of children attending part-day (3 hours up to 5 hours) x weekly fee = _____

_____ # of children attending full-day (>25 hrs/wk.) x weekly fee = _____

Estimate of total amount of parent fees generated per week: _____

STEP 5: Estimate of Parent Fees Generated for FY 2000:

Total parent fees/week (step 4) x # weeks program will be in operation = _____ Estimate of parent fees generated for FY 2000.

Appendix D: COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS SLIDING FEE SCALE

GROSS MONTHLY INCOME (Effective 10/01/92)

Level	GROSS MONTHLY INCOME			Weekly
	Family of Two	Family of Three	Family of Four	
I	0-242	0-251	0-299	0-347
II	243-485	252-503	300-599	\$0.20 \$0.30
III	486-728	504-755	600-899	\$0.40 \$1.043
IV	729-971	756-1,007	900-1,199	\$1.80 1,044-1,391
V	972-1,214	1,008-1,259	1,200-1,499	\$3.60 1,392-1,739
VI	1,215-1,457	1,260-1,511	1,500-1,799	\$5.60 1,740-2,087
VII	1,458-1,700	1,512-1,763	1,800-2,099	\$8.00 2,088-2,435
VIII	50% SMI	1,701-1,862	1,764-1,931	\$10.40 2,088-2,667
IX	1,863-2,024	1,932-2,099	2,300-2,499	\$12.60 2,668-2,899
X	2,025-2,186	2,100-2,267	2,500-2,699	\$14.80 2,900-3,131
XI	2,187-2,348	2,268-2,435	2,700-2,899	\$17.40 3,132-3,363
XII	2,349-2,510	2,436-2,603	2,900-3,099	\$20.00 3,364-3,595
XIII	75% SMI	2,511-2,672	2,604-2,771	\$22.80 3,596-3,827
XIV	100% SMI	2,673-3,644	2,772-3,779	\$22.80 3,828-5,219
XV	125% SMI	3,645-4,555	3,780-4,724	\$25.00 4,500-5,624

Level	GROSS MONTHLY INCOME			Weekly
	Family of Six	Family of Seven	Family of Eight	
I	0-395	0-404	0-413	0-422
II	396-791	405-809	414-827	\$0.20 \$0.30
III	792-1,187	810-1,214	828-1,241	\$0.40 846-1,268
IV	1,188-1,583	1,215-1,619	1,242-1,655	\$1.80 1,269-1,691
V	1,584-1,979	1,620-2,024	1,656-2,069	\$3.60 1,692-2,114
VI	1,980-2,375	2,025-2,429	2,070-2,483	\$5.60 2,115-2,537
VII	2,376-2,771	2,430-2,834	2,484-2,897	\$8.00 2,538-2,960
VIII	50% SMI	2,772-3,035	2,835-3,104	\$10.40 2,961-3,242
IX	3,036-3,299	3,105-3,374	3,174-3,449	\$12.60 3,243-3,524
X	3,300-3,563	3,375-3,644	3,450-3,725	\$14.80 3,525-3,806
XI	3,564-3,827	3,645-3,914	3,726-4,001	\$17.40 3,807-4,088
XII	75% SMI	3,828-4,091	3,915-4,184	\$20.00 4,089-4,370
XIII	100% SMI	4,092-4,355	4,185-4,454	\$22.80 4,371-4,652
XIV	125% SMI	4,356-5,939	4,455-6,074	\$22.80 4,653-6,344
XV	5,940-7,424	6,075-7,593	6,210-7,761	\$25.00 6,345-7,930

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
SLIDING FEE SCALE FOR CHILD CARE

(1) Initial eligibility level for all families except those with a child/parent with special needs/incapacity or those participating in DOE's Community Partnership Program.

(2) Maximum income level for all families except those with a child/parent with special needs/incapacity or those participating in DOE's Community Partnership Program.

SCII = State Median Income

125% YEARLY STATE MEDIAN INCOME BY FAMILY SIZE

Family of two:	\$43,740 - \$54,660
Family of three:	\$45,360 - \$56,688
Family of four:	\$54,000 - \$ 67,488
Family of five:	\$62,640 - \$ 78,288
Family of six:	\$71,280 - \$ 89,088
Family of seven:	\$72,900 - \$ 91,116
Family of eight:	\$74,520 - \$ 93,132
Family of nine:	\$76,140 - \$ 95,160

The incomes listed above correspond to the gross monthly incomes on the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Subsidized Child Care Sliding Fee Scale. Working families with gross annual incomes anywhere below the higher figure for their family size listed would be eligible for early care and education services under the Community Partnerships for Children program.

Community Partnerships Early Care and Education Fee Agreement

Date

1. ADULT INFORMATION:

Name(s): _____ Home Telephone #: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____ Zip: _____

_____ Parent Social Security #: _____ Work Phone #: _____

(parent/guardian/name) (optional)

Parent Social Security #: _____ Work Phone #: _____

(parent/guardian/name) (optional)

11. *What is the primary purpose of the following statement?*

2. CHILD INFORMATION:

Child(ren) Enrolled in Community Partnerships:

Date of Birth: _____
Date of Birth: _____

Other Children in Family:

3. PROGRAM INFORMATION:

Name of program(s):

Contact(s): _____

Address: _____ Phone#: _____

Cost of program per week: Partial day _____ Full Day _____

4. TOTAL GROSS MONTHLY INCOME:

Monthly wages from all contributing adults: _____
(average of 4 weeks weekly gross income X 4.33)

Child support/alimony: _____

SSI/DA: _____

Other: _____

Total Gross Monthly Income: _____

5. DETERMINATION OF PARENT FEES

Family Size: _____ Total Gross Monthly Income: _____

Parent Fee Per Week: _____

I certify under penalty of perjury that the information provided is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I will immediately report any change in income, family size, or child care needs. I agree to pay all weekly fees to the authorized child care provider. I will also pay an initial deposit equal to one week's fee. The information requested on this form is used to determine eligibility and fees. It will be held strictly confidential as required under Massachusetts statutes and regulations.

parent/guardian signature

agency staff signature

date

date

OFFICE USE ONLY

Approved: _____ Initials: _____ Date: _____

Verification of Income _____

Weekly Program Costs \$ _____

Weekly Parents' Fees \$ _____

Grant Funds Allocated Per Week \$ _____

Number of Weeks _____ Total Grant Award \$ _____

Start Date: _____

End Date: _____

Reassessment Date: _____

X. GUIDELINES FOR CAPITAL EXPENDITURES

If a community needs assessment indicates a lack of physical capacity to serve more young children and potential placements have been exhausted, the Council may allocate funds to expand and/or improve the quality or appropriateness of existing space. Funds may be used for planning capital projects and for purchasing, constructing, or renovating facilities. To receive approval to use CPC funds for such projects, Councils must follow the guidelines and meet the eligibility criteria outlined below.

Capital expenditures or projects are defined as:

- (a) Projects that expand the physical capacity of early care and education programs, e.g., expansion of an existing site, purchase of a new site/land/building; or
- (b) Projects that supplement services for existing programs, e.g., classrooms, playground, or indoor play spaces, building modifications/renovations, such as those required by code, licensing or the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Initial Project Size Criteria

1. All capital projects should be clearly outlined in the CPC proposal and in the budget approved by the Council, and must meet the eligibility criteria outlined below. Projects under \$5,000 may simply be described in the proposal and appropriate budget line item. For all projects over \$5,000 a separate application, the Capital Expenditure Application, must also be submitted.

Family child care providers are eligible to apply for no more than \$25,000. Funds may be used to enlarge family child care (to expand the size of the program from 6 to 10 children) or to enhance quality.

Expansion projects in both family child care and center-based programs may not be located in basements. If a basement has direct access to the outside and natural light and ventilation that is comparable to a first floor location, special permission may be requested from Department of Education. If the basement is already being used for the purpose of child care, funds may be used to supplement services for children and families.

All capital work at a single site will be considered a single project, even if different types of work are proposed, such as a new playground and window replacement.

2. Center-based projects estimated to cost \$25,000 or more must increase the supply of early care and education placements. For projects estimated to cost \$25,000 or more must, funds must be set aside to cover technical assistance and oversight to ensure sound investment of public dollars. These funds must be 5% of the total proposed capital project budget and will be paid by the grantee to the Child Care Capital Investment Fund (FUND), a non-profit agency with expertise in child care facilities and development. The FUND will provide administrative oversight of projects on behalf of the Department of Education and will provide Councils with technical assistance and training to support the completion of projects within the Department's timelines and eligibility requirements.

Eligibility Criteria

1. Capital funds must be used to create space for 3 and 4 year old children participating in a CPC-supported program and be used for projects that assure long term use by early care and education programs.
 - At least 50% of any newly created space must be used for 3 and 4 year old children of working families meeting CPC eligibility criteria.
 - At least 50% of the children being served in any preschool program applying for financial assistance must be from families whose income is 100% or less than the state median income.
 - CPC funds may only be used for the renovation of space that the CPC program will be using in a building. A CPC program is defined as a site that receives CPC grant monies to provide services to children and families.
 - If the completed project within a building, such as an indoor or outdoor play area, will be shared with non-CPC programs, the project cost must be divided proportionately. This includes programs that have only a portion of CPC eligible children.
 - The program must provide full-day, full-year preschool early care and education or provide specialized child care, such as off-hour care, that meets the needs of working families.
 - The program must demonstrate its ability to support an expansion project in its operational budget for 5 years.
2. Community Partnerships for Children may provide capital assistance under the following conditions:
 - Programs must be one of the following:
 - center-based and Head Start programs licensed by OCCS
 - public school early childhood education programs
 - family child care programs licensed by OCCS
 - The purpose and effect of the investment must be to increase the supply and/or supplement services for child care and education.
 - The provider must own his/her site or demonstrate long-term control of the site, e.g., hold a lease for a minimum of five years.
 - Programs seeking project approval must have been in operation and licensed for a minimum of three years.
 - The capital funding is contingent upon the program continuing to meet the CPC capital program eligibility criteria and must guarantee the provision of services to the CPC population for at least five years after completion of the capital project. The

program must repay the CPC lead agency, who in turn must repay the Department, if the space is not used to provide services for preschool-age children for at least five years after the completion of the project. If the program does not continue to meet the eligibility criteria for the entire five-year period, repayment to the Department by the CPC lead agency is required as follows:

- after one year or less of providing services, repayment of 100% project cost;
- after two years of providing services, repayment of 80%;
- after three years of providing services, repayment of 60%; and,
- after four years of providing services, 40% of the project cost.

- Programs run by school districts must repay capital funds if the space is reallocated to programs other than preschool programs. State early childhood funds may not be used to repay these funds.
- Repayment provisions must be included, as appropriate, in all subcontracts.
- The project design must produce space that is developmentally appropriate, comprehensive, and meets National Association of Early Childhood Programs accreditation standards.
- Capital projects must be sound, feasible, and cost effective. The proposed budget must be realistic.
- Applicants must demonstrate that appropriate financing cannot be obtained elsewhere, although CPC funds may be used for leverage or borrowing.
- Projects funded by CPC must not be appropriate for funding through School Building Assistance.
- If the assistance is for quality improvements, applicants must demonstrate how the project will help meet or maintain NAECP accreditation.
- All applications for capital expenditure projects costing \$25,000 or more must be received by January 21, 2000 to be considered for approval. Applications for projects less than \$25,000 must be received by March 31, 2000 to be considered for approval. The plan for the project must be included in the original proposal and budget unless an amendment is submitted.

Allocating Funds in Large Cities

If a CPC has many potential and/or competing capital investment projects, the Council should develop a competitive Request for Responses (RFR) application process for the equitable disbursement of funds that includes the Department's Capital Expenditure Application. Early Learning Services will assist Councils in the selection of projects on request.

XI. ADMINISTERING THE GRANT AND DEVELOPING SUBCONTRACTS

Funds for the Community Partnerships for Children program are distributed through grants from the Department of Education to a lead agency. Once proposals have been selected for funding, the CPC and/or lead agency contact person is notified and any budgetary or programmatic changes are negotiated. The grant is then processed by the Department. Proposed activities and services may begin upon notification of approval from the Financial Management unit of the Department. The lead agency is then responsible for overseeing implementation of the Community Partnerships Council's plan. The Council and lead agency are then committed to implementing the approved plan and budget.

Accountability

The lead agency, the Community Partnerships Council and the subcontractors all have roles to ensure that the grant is administered in a way that provides the greatest benefit to children and families.

- The lead agency is responsible for developing a system of fiscal management for CPC funds, administering fiscal aspects of the grant, reporting to the Department of Education and monitoring subcontractors to ensure that they are adequately carrying out the scope of work described in their contract. The lead agency is responsible for ensuring that Council members are fully involved in significant fiscal and programmatic decisions. This includes distributing copies of the approved grant proposal and budget, and a summary of subcontracts (who, what, how much). It is recommended the lead agency provide training for Council members and subcontractors on its internal fiscal control systems and reporting requirements.
- The Council is responsible for developing and overseeing that the plan approved by the Department of Education is carried out as designed, or for making sure that changes are approved by the Department.
- Subcontractors are responsible for carrying out the agreed-upon tasks specified in their contracts and for providing accurate budgetary and programmatic data to the lead agency, the Council and when appropriate, the Department of Education.

Early Learning Services at the Department of Education has offered fiscal training open to all Community Partnership lead agencies and Council members for the last two years and will continue to provide technical assistance regarding fiscal and accountability issues.

Program and Fiscal Reviews

Early Learning Services has contracted for two years with an outside agency to conduct program and fiscal reviews. In two years this firm has reviewed the proposed services and activities against actual accomplishments and expenditures, internal fiscal structures and procedures, how the lead agencies monitored subcontracts, and compliance with the Guide to Community Partnerships for Children. In the last two fiscal years, thirteen CPC and two Massachusetts Family Network programs have been reviewed. Fifteen additional reviews are scheduled for FY 2000.

During FY 1998, 1999 and in 2000 the State Auditor's Office independently audited the Community Partnership program as well. The State Auditor examines the internal fiscal controls of a lead agency as well as the implementation of the program by the Department.

Amendments

Programmatic changes and reallocations of grant funds based on demonstrated need must first be approved by the Council. If a line item increases by 10 percent, or \$100 (which ever is greater), an amendment must be filed with the Department. Three copies of a signed amendment form, a revised budget, and minutes of the Council meeting when the proposed amendment was discussed and approved by the full Council, is then submitted by the lead agency to the appropriate liaison in Early Learning Services for approval. Typically, no more than two amendments are submitted to the Department in any fiscal year. **Final budget amendment requests should be submitted by April 30th** to allow sufficient time for funds to be expended and goods and/or services received on or before June 30th. Goods or services received after June 30 cannot be charged to the grant. Standard grant amendment forms are available through the Department of Education (see Amendment Process outline in DOE's *Grants for Schools: Getting Them and Using Them: A Procedural Manual*).

Subcontracts

All people, agencies or organizations that provide services to children, conduct training, renovate, etc., must have valid subcontracts. Head Start, public school preschools, center-based child care and preschool programs, and independent and systems of family child care providers are all eligible to serve children. All preschools under the auspices of the public schools, Charter Schools, or private PreK-Grade 6 schools (where 50% or more are children above grade 1) that are exempt from licensing by OCCS, must comply with the Department's *Early Childhood Standards for Programs for Three -and Four -Year Olds*. All programs that are subject to Office of Child Care Services (OCCS) licensing standards must be licensed and be in substantial compliance with OCCS regulations to be eligible to serve children with grant funds. If there is a question about the status or licensing history of a child care center, private preschool, Head Start program, or family child care provider, the lead agency should contact the regional Office of Child Care Services. OCCS automatically sends the Department of Education copies of any legal actions OCCS may be taking related to any program providing services to preschool aged children. The Department of Education then forwards the information to the appropriate CPC Council through the contact person for the grant.

Lead agencies may not subcontract with themselves for children's tuition subsidies. Lead agencies must take an amount in teacher/classroom aide salaries proportionate to the number of CPC children served. The only instance where the lead agency can subcontract with itself is when a full-time employee (1.0 FTE) is paid a stipend to perform duties beyond the scope of responsibilities of his/her full-time job.

Criteria for quality and/or methods of ascertaining quality may be included in the subcontract. These criteria may pertain to initial quality requirements for participation, maintenance of quality standards and conditions under which services to children through CPC can be terminated based on an insufficient level of quality. Timelines for achieving accreditation or other credentials must at least meet those in this Guide.

Selecting subcontractors: There are several approaches for selecting subcontractors, depending on the size and nature of the community. For small communities, an open invitation to all providers may be feasible. A review of interested providers may be conducted in a Council meeting, and subcontractors selected through a consensus process as long as this approach is agreeable to all.

In larger communities, some strategies are:

- Develop a request for proposals (RFP) that is sent to all providers eligible for subcontracts. The RFP should be written in clearly understood language. The RFP might include: 1) a brief overview or purpose of the CPC program; 2) the services being sought; 3) eligibility criteria, selection process and a maximum amount for which programs may apply; 4) information about format of narrative and budget, due date and contact person; 5) provisions/requirements of subcontractors. The Council, or subcommittee, must have written criteria for selecting which providers will serve children or provide other services and be able to justify their selection decisions.
- Send an application to providers requesting pertinent information from those who are interested in participating. This is a less formal method of informing and soliciting participants. A cover letter and/or a fact sheet should be included that describes the CPC program, requirements and timelines, etc. These applications must be reviewed by the Council or its designee.

Regardless of the approach selected, various levels of participation are possible. Some providers (Head Start, public school, private centers, family child care) may be ready and able to accept eligible children into their programs immediately. Programs not ready to serve children immediately may get involved by starting the accreditation, CDA or other processes with a commitment to accept children in the future, or participate in joint professional development or other activities planned by the Council.

One important aspect of “readiness” is based on quality. Some objective measure should be selected as a measure of quality. The initial level is licensing and/or meeting the Department’s *Early Childhood Standards for Programs for Three- and Four- Year Olds*. Beyond that, Councils are encouraged to select additional criteria and methods for entrance into the program as a provider. Judgements of quality within a community can be controversial and undermine collaboration. For this reason, one way to defuse potential conflict is to hire a consultant to use an agreed-upon measure, such as the ECCOS or ECERS, setting a minimum score that must be attained for programs to be able to serve children.

One approach for the type of involvement that does not include serving children is to use subcontracts for materials, professional development, accreditation or CDA costs. This strategy can open up opportunities equitably to providers in the community. A simple RFP can be designed that would require providers to demonstrate how funds will enhance quality and allow them to achieve accreditation. Councils would determine a criteria/formula to evaluate these proposals for subcontracts that only include monies for materials, supplies, accreditation fees, training, etc.

If a center has no interest in being accredited or accepting children through this program, or refuses to progress through the accreditation/CDA timeline, funds for supplies or other purposes should not be granted to that program.

Use of Funds: In all instances, subcontracts cannot provide funds to underwrite operating costs for programs/agencies. Funds received must be directly pertinent to CPC (e.g., subsidies for eligible children, materials/supplies/professional development/consultation to achieve or maintain accreditation, conduct training, provide behavioral and other consultative services, etc). Funds for materials and supplies, whether children are served or not, should be based on demonstrated need tied to CPC objectives.

Chapter 30B: In the opinion of the Office of the Inspector General, M.G.L., Chapter 30B (the law outlining procurement procedures for government agencies) should **not** apply to subcontracts for early care and education services under the Community Partnerships for Children program. If a public school or other public entity is the lead agency, the business manager for the agency and/or city or town should be informed of this opinion. Chapter 30B exemption pertains only to child care services. A copy of the letter from the Inspector General to the Department to this effect may be requested from Early Learning Services. Since it is in the best interest of the local program to develop a collaborative system of early care and education in the community, it is still essential for the lead agency and Council to conduct outreach to agencies and individuals (private child care centers, other agencies and consultants for training and/or comprehensive services) that is fair and inclusive.

Developing subcontracts: After selection processes are completed, the lead agency will develop subcontracts with individuals or providers. All subcontracts funded by the grant must be in writing and be functionally identical to, consistent with and subject to the provisions that are required by the Commonwealth Terms and Conditions for contracts. The Department of Education requires lead agencies to include in all subcontracts

- rates and how rates are determined;
- scope of services to be provided; and
- what/how data reporting requirements will be met by the subcontractor.

All subcontracts must contain the terms and conditions from DOE (see sample subcontract, items #4 through 19).

In addition, where applicable, a provider should include a copy of the OCCS license, NAECP accreditation, CDA certificate or early childhood degree along with his/her signed contract. It is recommended that only the lead agency enter into subcontract agreements funded by the CPC program.

The lead agency must inform all subcontractors of its internal controls, procedures, and timelines regarding applicable fiscal and accountability protocols including, but not limited to:

- Submitting invoices
- Purchase orders
- Going out to bid
- Documentation of expenses
- Documentation of services
- Town warrant

- All products, advertising, and materials should contain a clause stating the funds were provided through a grant from the Massachusetts Department of Education's Community Partnerships for Children program.

What constitutes evidence: The lead agency is responsible for informing subcontractors and collecting evidence to support each reimbursement/disbursement of funds. At any given time, the lead agency should be able to support every expenditure through this three step process:

1. the request for purchase, authorized by the lead agency, or its designee (i.e., purchase order; work described in the scope of service in a subcontract);
2. the deliverable (e.g., vendor packing slips for supplies received, attendance sheets and evaluation from a workshop, classroom attendance records); and
3. the bill to pay for services rendered (i.e., invoices from providers, utility bill, vendor invoice).

In addition, every expenditure should align with an activity or budget line item in the approved Community Partnerships for Children grant application. It is recommended that lead agencies keep a record of expenditures consistent with grant budget line items.

Monitoring and Amending Subcontracts

Lead agencies routinely monitor the CPC subcontracts to ensure that services are being provided. Site visits, reports of accomplishments, regular meetings and participant feedback are all monitoring strategies. Sample forms are available upon request from Early Learning Services.

If circumstances change and the scope of services is altered, lead agencies are advised to amend subcontracts to accurately reflect services (e.g., actual vs. estimated number of children being served, etc.).

Sample Subcontract

The provisions that must be included in a subcontract funded under the CPC grant program are described on the following pages. You may use the following as a subcontract with the particulars for the lead agency added. Information in brackets, in bold and/or italics **[xyz]** indicates where additional specific information about your project should be inserted. Information outside of brackets must be conveyed in every subcontract. The following pages may be copied. Also, a copy on disk can be requested from Early Learning Services or you may request it to be sent via E-mail.

[NAME OF PARTNERSHIP]

Design a **Cover Page** [This should provide space for the **signature** of the authorized officer of each agency agreeing to the subcontract. This page should also include the **maximum dollar amount** of the subcontract and the **effective date and duration** of the subcontract.]

1. **Purpose and Scope of Services:** [Write a statement naming the parties and describing the purpose of the subcontract. Describe the scope of the work to be done and the relationship between the lead agency and the subcontractor. Include **any tasks, responsibilities or products** pertaining to the work to be done, such as the estimated number of children to be served, commitments to accreditation, training or any other provision related to participation in the Community Partnerships program. The use of any excess funds generated from parent fees or from any other source should be specified.]
2. **Budget:** [Include a **budget** for the work described above. Attach to the subcontract if necessary. Include an **estimate of revenues** from the parent sliding fee scale, if applicable. There should also be a **specific schedule for reporting** to the lead agency on actual costs incurred and accomplishments achieved. Subcontractors can only charge an indirect rate if they have a federally approved rate, and must attach a copy of their approved rate.]
3. **Payments:** [Include a **payment schedule** in the subcontract that demonstrates that regular payments will be delivered on a set schedule. Include a mechanism for the subcontractor to request payments on a defined schedule for the services rendered, i.e., invoices, and for the payments to be processed in a timely manner by the lead agency. Also specify any **documentation** that will be required to accompany invoices.] The subcontractor shall return any unspent funds to the lead agency no later than 7 days after the termination date of the subcontract. Payments may be withheld for non-performance or unsatisfactory performance upon the provision of notice to the subcontractor.

[at this point, the individualized portion of the subcontract ends. The following pages may be attached or retyped and attached to the preceding parts of the subcontract.]

4. **Termination and Suspension.** A subcontract may be terminated if one of the parties fails to complete any term, condition or material obligation of the subcontract. A notice to terminate must be given in writing 7 days prior to the recommended termination date. A subcontract may also be suspended if an unanticipated emergency condition exists. This is limited to rare and extreme circumstances and further limited to the period of emergency. A subcontract may be terminated or the funding reduced if funding is reduced in the contract or grant received by the lead agency. 14 days notice must be given. Neither party will be expected to complete the provisions of the subcontract if they are unable to do so due to causes beyond their control, such as floods, fires, wars, quarantines, strikes or unusually severe weather ("force majeure").
5. **Obligation in Event of Termination or Suspension.** If a subcontract is terminated or suspended, a timetable for meeting any stated requirements and a description of any allowable activities and approved costs incurred before termination or during suspension period must be included in the notice of termination or suspension.
6. **Records and Audits.** The subcontractor must maintain books, records and other data in such detail as shall properly substantiate receipt of funds from the lead agency and parent fees, if applicable; claims for payment; verification of participant eligibility, and program accomplishments (i.e., program goals achieved) under any funding award. These records must be made available to the lead agency, the Department of Education and its authorized representatives, and representatives of the Office of the State Auditor and the Inspector General at reasonable times and upon reasonable requests. All records must be retained for seven years from the termination date of the subcontract.
7. **Confidentiality.** The lead agency and the subcontractor will comply with all laws and regulations relating to confidentiality and privacy. The lead agency and subcontractor shall at all times recognize the Department's ownership of data related to program operation: including the numbers of children served, ages, whether or not children have an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP), first language of the children, type and duration of services, and income level of families of children served.
8. **Title to Equipment and Furnishings.** The subcontractor must keep a record of the equipment and furnishings purchased under the contract. As long as the equipment and furnishings purchased under this grant or contract are used in programs for young children, the lead agency or subcontractor is not required to return equipment or furnishings purchased with subcontract funds upon completion or termination of a funding award. The Department of Education retains the right to verify that the equipment and furnishings have continued to be used in programs for young children.
9. **Notice.** Any notice under a funding award shall be in writing and shall be deemed delivered when received in person or mailed to either party.
10. **Non-Discrimination in Employment and Affirmative Action.** The subcontractor shall not discriminate against any qualified employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, religion, disability, handicap or sexual orientation.

11. **Conflict of Interest and Undue Influence Prohibited.** The subcontractor may not use any funds, programs or services funded under this Agreement or any funding award for any partisan political activity or to further the election or defeat of any candidate for public office.
12. **Assignment.** The subcontractor may not assign or delegate, in whole or in part, or otherwise transfer any liability, responsibility, obligation, duty or rights, including present and prospective claims for money, under a funding award, provided however, that present and prospective claims for money due and owing to the subcontractor from the lead agency hereunder may be assigned to a bank, trust company, or other financial institution insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) provided the subcontractor provides written notice of the intent to make such assignment prior to the effective date of the assignment and the subcontractor complies with any additional Department requirements for effectuating such assignments.
13. **Subcontracting.** Subcontractors may not subcontract with other agencies for services they are committed to provide without the consent of both the lead agency and the Department of Education.
14. **Forum and Choice of Law.** The laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts shall govern this Agreement, any funding award, award attachments, and any performance herein, and all actions arising therein, shall be brought and maintained in a state or federal district court of competent jurisdiction within the Commonwealth which shall have exclusive jurisdiction thereof. This paragraph shall not be construed to limit any other legal or equitable rights of the parties.
15. **Indemnification.** Unless otherwise exempted by law, the subcontractor shall indemnify and hold harmless the lead agency against any and all liability, loss, damages, penalties, costs or expenses for personal injury or damage to real or tangible personal property which the lead agency may sustain, incur or be required to pay, resulting from, arising out of, or in connection with any services or activities performed under this Agreement or any funding award by reason of acts, inactions, omissions, negligence, reckless or intentional misconduct of the subcontractor provided that the subcontractor is notified by the lead agency of any claim within a reasonable time after the lead agency becomes aware of it, the subcontractor is afforded an opportunity to participate in the defense of such claim and any negotiated settlement agreement or final judgement. If applicable, indemnification by or for the subcontractors shall be determined in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. c. 258.
16. **Waivers.** Forbearance or indulgence in any form or manner by a party shall not be construed as a waiver, not in any way limit the legal or equitable remedies available to that party. No waiver by either party of any default or breach shall constitute a waiver of any subsequent default or breach.
17. **Amendments.** An amendment to a funding award shall not be effective unless it is executed by authorized representatives of both parties in accordance with all applicable laws, regulations and procedures and filed with the original funding award at the Office of the Comptroller.

18. **Severability, Headings and Interpretation, Integration.** All subcontracts by the parties must be in writing and consistent with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Standard Contract and in compliance with the agreement between the lead agency and the Department of Education. If any conflict arises, the provisions of the agreement between the Department and the lead agency takes precedence.

19. **Execution and Certifications Required of Subcontractors.**

- a. Employment Security Contribution and Workers' Compensation Insurance. The subcontractor has complied and shall continue to comply with all laws of the Commonwealth relating to contributions and payments in lieu of the contributions to the Employment Security System, and relating to compulsory workers' compensation insurance covering all employees of the subcontractor.
- b. Provision of Child Care. If the subcontractor has 50 or more full-time employees, it is required to establish a dependent care assistance program, a child care tuition assistance, or onsite or near-site child care placements, or is an "exempt employer". A subcontractor shall be considered an exempt employer if the subcontractor receives a funding award or other financial assistance from the Commonwealth that qualifies as a "grant-in-aid."
- c. Debarment. The subcontractor certifies that it is not currently debarred or suspended by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, or the federal government under any Commonwealth or federal law or regulation.
- d. Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The IRS requires Form W9 to be completed by all self-employed individuals and retained by the subcontractor, e.g., independent family child care provider. The IRS requires that Form 1099 must be issued to any self-employed individual who is paid \$600 or more in a calendar year. Forms can be downloaded from the IRS web site (www.irs.ustreas.gov). Subcontractors should keep detailed records of grant funds itemizing amounts received for children's subsidies, reimbursements for supplies, materials, training, fees, etc.

REFERENCES

Some of the information in this technical assistance guide was based on and adapted from the following resources:

Children's Defense Fund (1994). Helping Children By Strengthening Families. Washington, DC.

Hazel, Robin; Patricia A. Barber; Sally Roberts; Shirley K. Behr; Edwin Helmstetter & Doug Guess (1988). A Community Approach to an Integrated Service System for Children with Special Needs. Baltimore. Paul H. Brookes Publishers. #1: "Getting Started," 1988.

"Integrating Education, Health and Human Services for Children Youth and Families" a report of an initiative of 50 national organizations (date unknown).

Kadel, Stephanie (1993). Interagency Collaboration: Improving the Delivery of Services to Children and Families. SouthEastern Regional Vision for Education (SERVE).

Kirby, Douglas (1989). Research Methods for Assessing and Evaluating School-Based Clinics. Chapter III, "Conducting Needs Assessments," p.7.

Massachusetts Department of Education (1997). Grants for Schools: Getting Them and Using Them: A Procedural Manual.

Massachusetts Department of Education (1994). School Councils - Needs Assessment: Process and Practices. This document contains sample survey response formats, interviews, telephone interviews, open forums, etc.

Massachusetts Department of Education (1992). Working Together. Massachusetts Early Childhood Advisory Council, Putnam-Franklin, Sandra, ed.

Massachusetts Office for Children (1996). School Age Care Technical Assistance Papers.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (1996). Guide to Accreditation by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs. Rev. ed. Washington, DC: NAEYC.

Quincy Community Action Program: 1993 Community Partnerships Family Needs Assessment, Quincy, MA.

Samuels, B., Ahsan, N., & Garcia, J. (1995). Know Your Community: A Step-by-Step Guide to Community Needs and Resources Assessment. Chicago: Family Resource Coalition.

Swan, William and Morgan, Janet (1993). Collaborating for Comprehensive Services for Young Children and Their Families. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing.

Tufts, University/Quality Enhancement Project (January, 1997) Collaboration: A Key to Success for Community Partnerships for Children, QEP Technical Assistance Tips #2.

Additional Resources on Collaboration and Community Planning

Coalition Building Tips: "Coalitions and Lead Agencies: Bridging the Gap," "Healthy Schools, Healthy Communities: The ABC's of Building a Partnership," "Principles of Success," "The Care and Feeding of Coalition Leaders," "What Coalitions are Not," "Coalition Barriers and How to Overcome Them (or Help! I'm trapped in a coalition and can't get out)," "Coalition Barriers and How to Overcome Them: Part II." A series of short papers by AHEC/Community Partners, Amherst, MA. Call 413-253-4283 or write AHEC, 24 S. Prospect St., Amherst, MA 01002.

Collaboration: What Makes it Work by Paul Mattessich and Barbara Monsey of the Wilder Research Center, and *Collaboration Handbook: Creating, Sustaining and Enjoying the Journey*, also from the Wilder Foundation. St. Paul MN at 1-800-274-6024 or www.wilder.org.

Community Mobilization: Strategies to Support Young Children and Their Families, by Amy Laura Dombro, Nina Sazer O'Donnell, Ellen Galinsky, Sarah Gilkeson Melcher and Abby Farber. Families and Work Institute, New York, NY. Call 212-465-2044. Copies are \$22.00.

Technical Assistance Tips. (1995) "Continuous Improvement, Collaboration and Engaging Families," by the Quality Enhancement Project, Tufts University, Medford, MA. Order from Early Learning Services, Department of Education. Call 781-388-3300, ext. 357. Free.

Years of Promise: A Comprehensive Learning Strategy for America's Children, (Sept., 1996) Carnegie Task Force on Learning in the Primary Grades, Carnegie Corporation, New York, NY. Call 212-207-6285 or write Carnegie Corp., P.O. Box 753, Waldorf, MD 20604, to order. Copies are \$10.

Additional Resources on Parent Involvement

Making Room at the Table: Fostering Family Involvement in the Planning and Governance of Family Support Systems, Family Resource Coalition of America, 20 N. Wacker Dr., Suite 110, Chicago, IL 60606 (312) 338-0900, frca@frca.org.

Additional Resources on Inclusion

Child Care and the ADA: A Handbook for Inclusive Programs. Youcha Rab, Victoria and Ikeda Wood, Karen. Paul.H. Brookes Publishing. 1995.

Diversity & Developmentally Appropriate Practices: Challenges for Early Childhood Education. Mallory, Bruce and New, Rebecca. Teachers College Press. 1994.

Action for Inclusion: How to Improve Schools by Welcoming Children with Special Needs Into Regular Classrooms. O'Brien and Forest. Inclusion Press. 1992.

A Place for Me: Including Children with Special Needs in Early Care and Education Settings. Chandler, Phyllis A. National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). 1994.

APPENDIX A: LEGISLATION

M.G.L. Chapter 15, Section 54: The following is the text of the enabling legislation for the Community Partnerships for Children program:

Section 54: (a) The board may contract with school districts, head start agencies, and other child care providers to provide early care and education opportunities to three-year-old and four-year-old children of working parents. Pursuant to this section, the department shall seek to increase the availability of early care and education services and to encourage all local providers of such services to work together to create an array of options allowing families to select programs that fit with their schedules. Not less than one-third of the total slots funded shall provide full-day, full-year care that meets the needs of parents who work full-time. All slots funded pursuant to this section shall be in addition to existing services and shall be responsive to the needs of working parents.

(b) The board may establish standards for pre-kindergarten programs delivering services pursuant to this section, and said standards shall meet or exceed the existing standards of the office for children for programs which serve three-and four-year-old children in whole and half-day programs. The board shall collaborate with the Office for Children, the Massachusetts Association of Day Care Agencies, Parents United for Child Care, the Young Men's Christian Association of Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Independent Child Care Organization, and Head Start to develop, for said programs, a common set of standards and licensing procedures built around the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs accreditation process; provided that said procedures may include regulations regarding physical facilities and equipment that shall be the minimum standards for said programs notwithstanding stricter provisions of the existing regulations promulgated by the office for children.

(c) There shall be not more than one proposal submitted for each town. The proposal shall be developed by a community partnerships Council comprised of a principal, three individuals who provide early care and education to young children, two parents of young children, a member of the local resource and referral agency, a representative of the local head start agency, a representative of private providers of child care, and others with experience in the care and education of young children. The Council shall select a lead agency, which may be a school district, a head start agency, or a licensed child care agency. Council members shall be broadly representative of the racial and ethnic diversity of the community. The Council shall develop a proposal which the lead agency shall submit to the department. Each member of the Council may include comments in the final proposal submitted to the department.

(d) The lead agency may subcontract with other public and private agencies to provide services; provided that any teacher employed by a contracting school district in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten is not displaced as a result of such contract.

(e) Proposals shall describe how the services provided will meet the needs of working parents in the local community. Proposals should include a mix of programs: full-day, full-year programs to meet the needs of parents who work full time; part-day programs operating during different parts of the day to serve parents with various work schedules; and other options the local Council determines will allow the system to best serve the needs of parents and children. Community partnerships Councils are encouraged to develop collaborative programs that coordinate services from various providers whenever such coordination can facilitate the efficient provision of early care and education services. Community partnerships Councils are further encouraged to develop proposals that include linkages to other human services agencies and which seek to combine a number of funding sources. Other agencies and programs may include, but not be limited to, state and federal nutrition programs and public health programs.

(f) All funds provided pursuant to this section shall provide services to children of working parents. For purposes of this section, "children of working parents" shall include any child of a

two-parent family in which both parents work either full-time or part-time, and any child of a single parent family in which the parent works either full-time or part-time; provided, however, that a child of working parents admitted to a program shall be allowed to remain in that program for the remainder of the year regardless of whether said child's parents continue to be working parents.

(g) Funds provided pursuant to this section shall not be used to provide services to those eligible for child-care services provided by the department of transitional assistance; provided, however, that local Councils shall seek to coordinate programs funded by this section with services funded or operated by the department of transitional assistance and other sources, including Head Start, Title I of the elementary and secondary education act, the department of social services, special education departments of local schools, and full-fee-paying parents. The department shall work in conjunction with the department of transitional assistance to obtain federal reimbursement pursuant to title IV-A of the Social Security Act for all participants in publicly funded early care and education programs who are eligible for such reimbursement. The department, in cooperation with the executive office of human services, shall assure that early care and education services are no less available in the aggregate to the children of disabled parents than they are to the children of non-disabled parents.

(h) Families with incomes below the statewide median income level shall be given priority for all services provided pursuant to this section. Families receiving services pursuant to this section shall make payments in accordance with the sliding fee scale promulgated by the executive office of human services, without regard for the eligibility standards established by said executive office.

(i) Proposals pursuant to this section shall include the following: a statement of need; a description of unmet needs and existing resources; program objectives and implementation plan; evaluation components; contractual agreements with other services providers; and linkages and funding arrangements with other public and private agencies. All programs providing services pursuant to this section shall seek accreditation from the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs. Proposals that include costs for training shall describe the type of training to be provided and an explanation of how that training will improve the services provided.

(j) The board shall establish an early childhood office which shall have the following functions with respect to programs that are operated by school districts, excluding any subcontractors that are not school districts: developing program standards for early childhood programs, and teacher certification standards for those early childhood teachers who are required to receive such certification. The office may also provide technical assistance to other providers to early care and education services under this section and administer the program established by this section.

(k) The board shall appoint a state advisory Council on early care and education. Members of the advisory Council may include, but not limited to, teachers, parents, representatives of state human service agencies, private providers of child care, higher education, business, labor, and government. Council members shall be broadly representative of the racial and ethnic diversity of the commonwealth. The advisory Council shall conduct a comprehensive study of future trends in early care and education, including the provision of services for children from birth to age three, and shall examine all early care and education services provided by the state to evaluate which populations have the greatest need for services, to what degree those populations are served by the program created by this section as well as by other existing services, and shall develop strategies for serving all unserved segments of the population. The Council shall report its findings to the board not later than January first of each odd-numbered year. In addition, the advisory Council shall review early care and education evaluations, certifications and program standards, and make recommendations to the board on needed program changes. The board shall report on the progress of the early care and education program and make recommendations to the general court by filing the same with the clerks of the house of representatives and of the senate on or before June thirtieth of each year.

APPENDIX B: DEFINITIONS

The term children of working parents is defined as "... any child of a two-parent family in which both parents work either full-time or part-time, and any child of a single-parent family in which the parent works either full-time or part-time; provided, however, that a child of working parents admitted to a program shall be allowed to remain in that program for the remainder of the year regardless of whether said child's parents continue to be working parents." (M.G.L. Chapter 15, Section 54). For the purpose of this program, the highest priority is to provide services to working parents with incomes below the state median income adjusted for family size. Guardians, grandparents, and surrogate caregivers are included in this definition in addition to biological mothers and fathers. For purposes of eligibility, a parent with a disability should be considered as equivalent to a working parent. Enrollment in a school or training program does not fulfill the requirement of either full- or part-time employment. It is expected that Community Partnerships Councils will coordinate services funded under this program with services funded by the Office of Child Care Services, Head Start, Title I, and full-fee paying parents.

A child with disabilities is any child who has been evaluated and the evaluation TEAM findings include a developmental delay in one or more areas such as receptive or expressive language; cognitive abilities; physical functioning; social, emotional or adaptive functioning; self-help skills and/or inability to progress effectively in a regular classroom.

The term Community Partnerships for Children implies that responsibility for the care and education of young children extends beyond the immediate family and beyond any one agency. The providers of early childhood programs and related family services and the available resources differ from community to community. The program name is intended to convey an expectation that a coalition of programs, service agencies, businesses and families in a community or group of communities will work collaboratively to assist families in the care and education of their young children.

The term comprehensive services is defined as, but not limited to, services including health, social and nutritional services components; supportive language services; mental health, family education and literacy, and family involvement activities.

Family child care is provided by a person who has a license from OCCS to care for children in the home. It provides a more intimate setting than a center-based program. Family child care is often the choice of parents with infants and toddlers because it is a more homelike setting with one consistent caregiver.

A family child care system is a network of OCCS licensed family child care providers supported by an early childhood educated professional staff. Services offered by a system often include administrative services, e.g., collection of parent fees, monitoring, and technical support, e.g., regular home visits, trainings.

Full-day program: a program in which a child is enrolled for more than 5 hours a day.

Full-time employment is defined as at least 25 hours per week. Part-time employment is defined as under 25 hours per week. There is no specific number of hours that parent(s) must be working. Effective on May 1, 2000, the definition will change (see Footnote # 2 on page 58).

The term high quality in early childhood programs is defined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children's *Developmentally Appropriate Practices for Early Childhood Programs* (Rev., 1997) as a program that "... provides a safe and nurturing environment that promotes the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of young children while responding to the needs of families." High quality programs integrate children of diverse abilities and needs, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and economic circumstances and provide or coordinate with other child and family-related services. High quality programs enhance the language development of children. For children whose first language is other than English, methods of supporting continued development of the first language is appropriate.

Integration/inclusion and diversity in an early care and education program indicates that the program serves a diverse group of children together while addressing individual needs. No specific number or ratio is prescribed here. However, it is expected that programs will include children with Chapter 766 Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs) **and** children from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. In a public school classroom including children on IEPs, no more than 49% of the children can be on IEPs in accordance with Chapter 766 502.8(c). Programs that do not currently serve children with disabilities must be willing and prepared to do so.

The lead agency is responsible for fiscal administration of the approved implementation plan for early care and education developed by the Community Partnerships Council. The lead agency is expected to participate on the Council in decision- and policy-making. A lead agency may be:

- a school district;
- a Head Start agency; or
- a child care agency licensed by the Office of Child Care Services.

Only in communities that do not have an existing lead agency can a lead agency be designated from one of three possible lead agencies listed above. All communities that had one lead agency in FY 95 must use that lead agency for this funding unless that agency agrees in writing to transfer to a different lead agency. For programs funded in FY 96 and 97, the most recent lead agency funded is the lead agency expected to submit a proposal for expansion. If a proposal that encompasses more than one town is funded and there is more than one lead agency in this group of communities, the Community Partnerships Council(s) will be responsible for selecting **one** of these lead agencies to administer funds in these communities in the following fiscal year.

A parent representative, for the purpose of participation on Community Partnerships Councils, is any biological, adoptive or foster parent, or a grandparent or other relative who is involved on a daily or weekly basis with the child either through custody or ongoing child care and who serves on the Council purely in their role as a parent, not as a provider of child or family services. A professional who is a parent, but whose role on the Council is to represent a service provider or another organization, should not be counted as a parent representative. For example, an early intervention specialist who also happens to be the mother of a two year old could not fulfill the role of being one of the parent representatives.

A part-day program designates that a child attends the program for less than 5 hours per day. For purposes of determining a parent's sliding fee scale payment, a part-day program can be either up to three hours a day or three hours up to five hours a day.

The term preschool-age 3 and 4 year old children includes children from age 2 years, 9 months (the Office of Child Care Services definition for the preschool age group) and children who are 5 years old but are not kindergarten-eligible according to the kindergarten entry age of the community in which they reside. Preschool should be considered to be the two years prior to the kindergarten year and eligibility ages should be calculated accordingly. The third or fifth birthdays should not be used as literal cutoff points for participation in this program.

A summer program is one that is either licensed by the Office of Child Care Services or is operated by public schools and meets Department of Education Preschool Standards. Summer camps licensed by local boards of health are not eligible to receive funding for CPC placements.

A wrap-around program is one in which additional early care and education services are provided to supplement a program that is not full-day or full-year. Examples of such programs include provision of a summer program or a program that extends a part-day program to a full-day program.

APPENDIX C: INFORMATION ON THE OPEN MEETING LAW

All Community Partnerships for Children programs must comply with the municipal Open Meeting Law (M.G.L. c.39, 23A-23C). Pertinent parts of the law are as follows:

Open meetings: “all meetings of a governmental body shall be open to the public.”

Public notice: “... a notice of every meeting of any governmental body shall be filed with the clerk of the city or town ... and notice shall be publicly posted in the clerk’s office or on the official bulletin board of such city or town at least 48 hours prior to such meeting ... The notice shall contain the date, time and place of such meeting filing and posting shall be the responsibility of the officer calling such meeting.”

Public records/votes: “A governmental body shall maintain accurate records of its meetings, setting forth the date, time, place, members present or absent and action taken at each meeting ... The records of each meeting shall become a public record and be available to the public ... No votes taken in open session shall be by secret ballot ... ‘Governmental body’ includes every subcommittee”

Sample Posting of Notice of Open Meeting

TO: City or Town Clerk

FROM: Name of CPC Council

DATE: At least 48 hours prior to CPC meeting

RE: Notice of Community Partnerships for Children meeting (or the name of the Council, if it is known by some other name)

The (Community Partnerships For Children Council) plans to hold a meeting on: (insert DATE/TIME/LOCATION)

In accordance with the Open Meeting Law, this meeting is open to the public.

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